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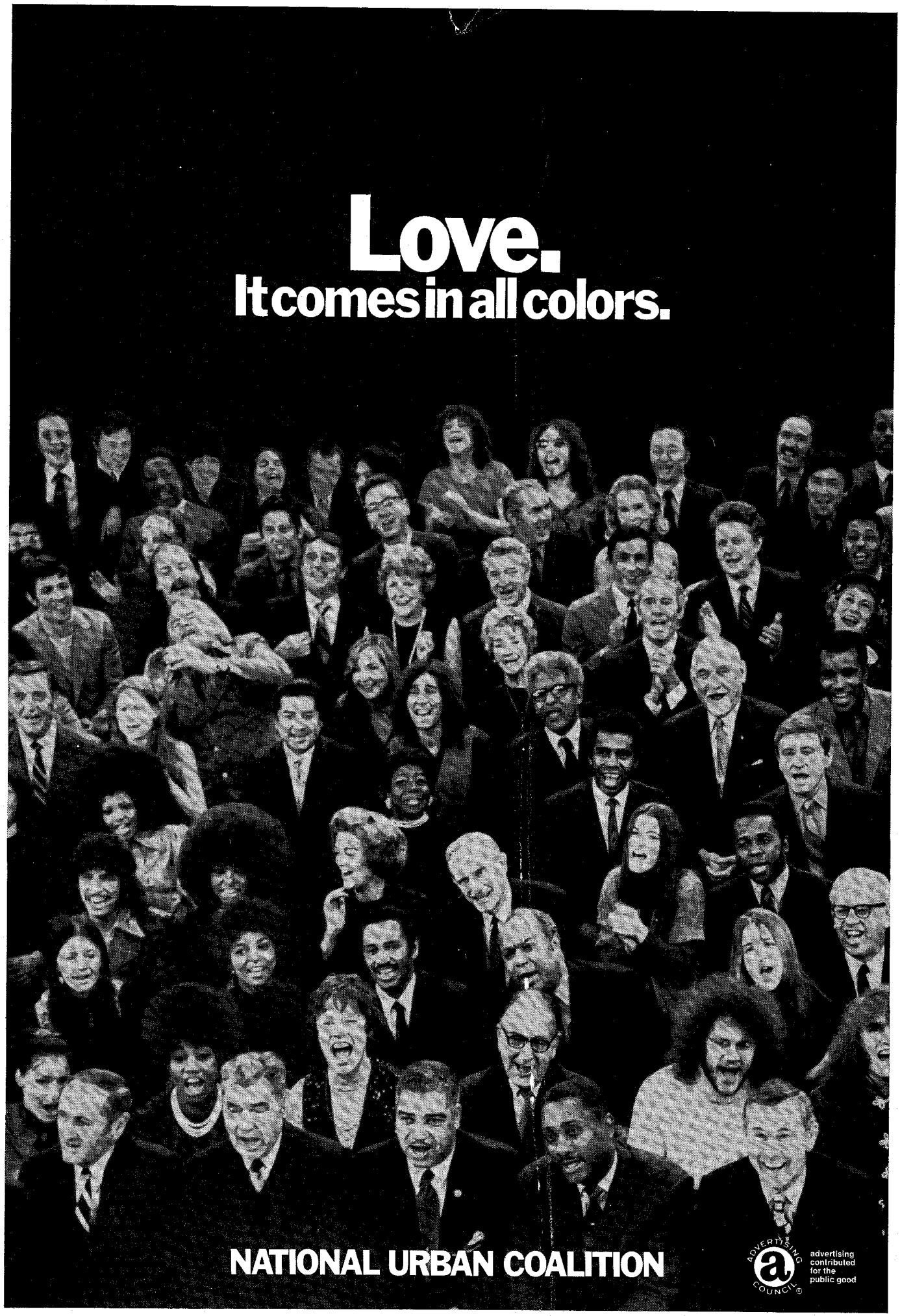

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from Washington

Middle East Head On

America needs a war in the Middle East like a hole in the head. Yet every day it comes nearer. On or about the time you read this Mr. Nixon will probably have sold Phantom jets and Skyhawks to Israel. No less than 76 senators urged him to do it; a majority so big and emotional that it recalls that time when all but two senators approved the Tonkin Gulf resolution.

If Americans were not obsessed with Vietnam they would be jumping up and down today with anxiety over the Middle East. We are eyeball to eyeball with the other Superpower – and each day tension mounts.

We got into Vietnam with the best of all intentions; our object was idealistic. It was an immaculate misconception. And how about the Middle East? Joe Alsop has declared war already. Yet it is one of the most complex tangles anywhere on earth. As anybody who has been there knows, or who has read James Michener's careful history, *The Source*, irreconcilable conflict has gone on for millennia. Americans say "Brave little Israel" – and with reason! Israel is an island of perhaps 2½ million Jews in an immediate sea of 100 million Arabs. Israel is a democracy. It is technologically modern. And it is a dream come true, of a homeland that existed 2000 years only in the imagination. The Bible tells the story.

But it is dangerous to chart geopolitics on a roadmap no later than the Bible. To the US Bible-belt it is simple as black and white. But it isn't simple to Mr. Nixon. And it isn't simple to the doves and hawks in Israel itself.

The land is saturated in sunshine and hate. Some people think the problem is insoluble. The US left a vacuum there beginning with Secretary Dulles' pettish rejection of the Aswan Dam, and Russia stepped in, probably not caring two straws for the Arabs but wanting, among other things, to reopen the Suez Canal so that it can get its ships down through the Red Sea to India and Cathay. And the last small chance of resolving the Israeli-Arab conflict with some show of reason probably turns on whether the hawks in the Knesset think they can count 100 percent on American support.

Am I being anti-Israeli? I don't think so. The excellent magazine *Commentary* is published in New York by the American Jewish Committee. In the June issue is an article by Shlomo Avineri, chairman of the department of political science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Speaking of the Middle East crisis he says, "Despite appearances it is not – and never was a struggle between the two Great Powers."

What is it then, for heaven's sake? Let us go back a bit. The land once populated predominantly by Arabs (Palestinians) was given to the Jews. Never mind the rights and wrongs, this is history. Some Palestinians stayed. But perhaps 1.5 million fled in the 1948 and 1967 wars. Many of them have now lived in refugee camps for two generations. Mark Hatfield (R, Ore.) told the Senate the other day, many of them (maybe most) have no vocational abilities whatsoever. But they can hate. The Middle East is where hatred was invented. The Palestinian guerrillas (*fedayeen*) don't care if they precipitate World War III or not.

The strange fact is that the Palestinians, whom most Americans haven't even identified yet, have a dream, too; it is a dream of a homeland and of a nation and they dream it with the mystical intensity of the Middle East that has produced three great religions. The "homeland" of the Palestinians is, of course, the territory occupied by the Israelis.

As Dr. Avineri puts it, "the Middle East conflict has never truly been susceptible of analysis in cold war terms." Great Power rivalry, he says, is a "secondary and derivative factor."

"There are probably more Marxists in Israel than in the whole of the Arab world, but the Soviet Union could not care less about that. Nor is it of any importance that in most Arab countries (including Egypt) Communist parties are outlawed and individual Communists rot in jail, whereas Israel is blessed with *two* Communist parties both of them represented in the Knesset."

So what is the conflict? "Basically and ultimately it is a conflict between two movements for national liberation." And today, Dr. Avineri says, "both the Jewish and the Arab national movements lay claim to the same piece of land, historic Palestine."

If Americans want a war in the Middle East, so be it; but it would be well to find out some of the pertinent facts about the situation now rather than later, as we did in Southeast Asia. Senator Hatfield notes, like Dr. Avineri, that the Palestinians feel they have a powerful cause. In the miserable refugee camps, he says, the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) makes available only 10 cents per day per refugee. What has the US done? Previously we had influence in the Arab lands. We were helping Egypt with its dam, and giving foreign aid, which is now all but terminated. Hatfield notes that we do aid the Palestinian refugees a little; our contribution to UNRWA is .002 percent of the gross national product. Canada, France, Sweden, the UK, give 10 to 100 times as much proportionately.

Beleaguered Israel spends 40 percent of its budget on the military; its annual trade deficit runs close to $1 billion; in a recent month the war took 61 lives, the equivalent of 4800 Americans in terms of population. It is estimated that the world Zionist movement has funneled $4 billion into Israel in donations since 1948; another guess is that half a billion dollars have come from the United States since the six-day war.

Of around six million Jews in the US perhaps some 750,000 are Zionists. It is poignant to compare the clout of this powerful group with that of the blacks, who are far more numerous but have hardly enough political influence to make the Nixon Administration aware of them.

Peace depends, Dr. Avineri pleads, on an accommodation between Jews and Arabs, and he offers his own plan. But above all he says that the younger generation in Israel holds "completely different attitudes" from its elders. There are hawks and doves in Israel, too.

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Very Ill? Try an Aspirin

The country's unemployed aren't likely to be cheered by the President's discussion last week of the troubles of the economy. He shrugged the jobless off as part of the price that has to be paid for "transition" from war to peace. Yet he said nothing to persuade us that there is any serious movement from a wartime to a peacetime economy. Turning the Vietnam war into the Indochina war hasn't made the war smaller, or shortened it. Some unemployment may have to do with defense reshuffles, but how much? The armed forces, Mr. Nixon said, have released 400,000 civilian and military workers; jobs in defense plants have fallen by 300,000; and this is "where much of the current increase in total unemployment has come from." But the jobless rate is five percent of the labor force – that's 4,300,000 unemployed. A five percent jobless rate was not necessary to put a lid on inflation. Anyway, the lid's still off. Prices are rising faster than before this Administration took over – the steepest rise in 20 years. The people who pay those prices may, for the moment, have jobs. They have no more reason to be cheered by the President's message, however, than those who are out of work. For as Mr. Nixon admits, "The momentum of four years of inflation was stronger than had been anticipated. The effect on unemployment is greater than we foresaw. The pace of our progress toward price stability and high employment has not been quick enough." But be patient: Adam Smith and Herbert Hoover will see us through; Mr. Nixon vows never to defile our free economic system" by price controls. What then is he going to do about higher prices and unemployment?

It's hard to believe, but the answer is almost literally, nothing: "At the outset of our fight [sic] against inflation, we pointed out that it would take time to relieve the heavy spending pressures on the economy; after that beginning, it would take more time" to slow down prices. After 16 months in the White House, it turns out that not Richard Nixon but old Father Time is cast in the role of economic healer. Of course the President did suggest some remedies, which on examination amount to little more than assuring a man with a high fever that his temperature will be taken at regular intervals. That's to be the function of "Inflation Alert," which Mr. Nixon has solemnly instructed the already overburdened Council of Economic Advisers to undertake. They are to spotlight significant areas of wage

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and price increases, and state what these do to the price level (which we already know). Under no circumstances are the distinguished economists to be permitted to indicate a view that a specific price increase, or wage agreement, is inflationary. Nor may they lay down price and wage guidelines, above which any price and wage rises would be deemed injudicious. That, say the spokesmen, would mean "vilifying" certain firms and labor unions. The people who pay through the nose for a commodity whose price is arbitrarily raised will just have to bear it. All "Inflation Alert" will do is suggest, very tactfully, that there seems to be an odd odor coming from some "significant area," and will do that only after the event, though a wage agreement may set the price pace for a full three-year period.

"We cannot," the President affirms, "protect the dollar by passing the buck." Then he passes it in two directions. If flourishing a thermometer fails to reduce the patient's temperature, it's going to be the fault of Congress, for "playing politics with inflation." A deadpan comedian was lost when Mr. Nixon took to statesmanship. He "urges" Congress to expand and strengthen unemployment insurance, to fund manpower training, to tie Social Security to the rising cost of living, *but* to join him in holding down spending. He warns Congress that "the American people expect their elected officials to do their political arithmetic honestly," but he'd like Congress to help the Small Business Administration "stimulate banks and others to make loans to small businesses at lower interest rates." No economic adviser seems to have informed the President that it is his Administration's tight money policy that has encouraged and even compelled banks to increase their profits greatly, by screwing up interest rates to the point where a working man who buys a $25,000 home on mortgage is having to pay $73 per month in extra interest alone, representing an additional $876 annually for 25 years.

"We're helping Mr. Nixon stabilize the economy."

Mr. Nixon's other buck is slipped to his new National Commission on Productivity – business, labor and consumer representatives, with a government official as chairman. The NCP is the President's final admission that he has no economic policy. The NCP's task is "to point the way toward" price stability and growth this year "and in the years ahead." This summer, it will bring together practically everybody – "business, labor, government and the general public" – to see what they can scotch-tape together in the way of ideas, "in a special President's Conference on Productivity." This last is the Administration's key code word. Its meaning appears to be that if output can somehow be raised, wages can be increased without affecting prices, and so nobody need be vilified for causing inflation. The labor unions are going to be suspicious of this one, probably rightly. According to the President, the real value produced by an hour of work – "productivity" – has lagged lately. His Productivity Commission is to jack it up, largely by appealing to the "progressive spirit of 86 million working Americans," less the ones who are unemployed. Just how much luck the Commission will have in this endeavor is hinted at in Management and Budget Director George P. Shultz's revelation that Detroit labor *and* management have already disinvited the federal government from their current negotiations: "Don't call us unless we call you."

Not for decades has simple laissez-faire been the way to keep the economic system either free or running. If growth, or "productivity," is the key, the obvious first step toward sustained economic expansion – lost by this Administration – is to restore general confidence by quitting the Indochina war. Mr. Nixon and his spokesmen are much too coy about the duration of "transition from a wartime economy to a peacetime economy," perhaps because they can't bring themselves to end our wasting national investment in victory for Thieu and Ky – or men like them. Meantime, inflation has grown so great – by default, on Mr. Nixon's own admission – that "jawboning" against further price rises is the least the President should undertake. If that fails, John Kenneth Galbraith's proposal of a six-month freeze on wages and prices in all industries is probably right; controls may be the only way to get interest rates down again and to meet the housing and dozens of other social needs Mr. Nixon says he wants fulfilled.

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Israel and the US

It's in our best interest to be sure that Israel survives as a nation. That has been our policy, and that will continue to be our policy. So we have to take whatever action we think is necessary to give them the assurance that they need that their independence and sovereignty is going to continue. – Secretary of State Rogers, June 7, 1970

Does this pledge (and it goes back 22 years) mean that the US would undertake another rescue operation, similar to that in Indochina, this time in the Middle East? It does not. The analogy with Vietnam is false. The Israeli-Arab conflict is not a civil war. Nor do the Israelis want American troops fighting for them. Nor is Israel, like South Vietnam, a patchwork of rival religious and tribal groups, governed intermittently by regressive and repressive oligarchies. And finally, the existence of a flourishing, democratic state in the Middle East is in the American national interest.

The heart of the difficulty, as stated by Secretary Rogers, is that "It's very difficult to get people to talk about these problems sensibly." There is too much bad history. It cannot be forgotten that seven Arab armies invaded Israel on the day the state was founded; it cannot be forgotten (by the Israelis) that on May 23, 1967, Nasser closed the Strait of Tiran; nor that one month later, he included among his "immutable principles" – "no negotiations, no peace, no recognition of Israel . . ." In more recent months, Nasser has softened that ultimatum, but not enough to reassure the Israelis that any guarantee of Israeli sovereignty is contemplated; or that Nasser is willing or able to control the guerrillas, who last week promised a "policy of escalation" aimed at Israel's liquidation.

"The current trend of events must be reversed if the situation is to be stabilized and if progress toward peace is to begin," Secretary Rogers said in March. Reversed how, by whom? Appearing before the House Foreign Affairs Committee June 9, Mr. Rogers summarized in two sentences what is required: "The UAR should abandon its refusal to enter any kind of negotiations and its insistence on prior Israeli withdrawal to the pre-June 1967 lines. Israel should make clear that it accepts the principle of withdrawal as laid down in the November 1967 Security Council Resolution, and that it will no longer insist on the formula of 'direct negotiations without pre-conditions'." Egypt has yet to give a clear sign that it is ready to negotiate, or give up its demand for prior Israeli withdrawal. Prime Minister Meir, on May 6, accepted the principle of withdrawal, and said that Israel did not rule out any kind of talks, including indirect negotiations based on the "Rhodes formula."

The tragic plight of the Palestinian refugees is not an obstacle to peace – once, as Mrs. Meir said, "the political roadblocks have been removed." Between 1948 and 1967, 45,000 Arabs did reenter Israel, as part of a family reunion plan. Little if any effort has been made by the Arab states to resettle the refugees. The Israeli Foreign Minister, on October 8, 1968, called for a conference of Middle Eastern states, together with the governments contributing to refugee relief, and the specialized agencies of the United Nations, "in order to chart a five-year plan for the solution of the refugee problem in the framework of a lasting peace and the integration of refugees into productive life." Nothing came of that initiative, except continuing raids on Israel and the demand, now echoed by some in this country, that the state of Israel be dismembered.

"Full of Fleas"

Almost a year ago, Attorney General Mitchell hailed the Administration's legislative package for the District of Columbia as a "model anticrime program." It called for a sweeping reorganization of Washington's court system, a much stronger public defender office there, a revision of the city's juvenile code, a system of preventive detention for those awaiting trial, and some other changes in the substance of the District's criminal law. The program was, in the eyes of many observers, the first real evidence of what all the campaign rhetoric concerning the need to do something about crime really meant.

Last March, when this legislation finally passed the House of Representatives in one large omnibus crime bill, Senator Sam Ervin took one look at it and denounced it as "a garbage pail of some of the most repressive, nearsighted, intolerant, unfair and vindictive legislation that the Senate has ever been presented." Not all of the provisions that have raised the hackles of Senator Ervin and many others are of the Administration's making. Some of them are attempts by the House District committee, perhaps the worst committee on Capitol Hill, to write into law the pet ideas of some of its members. The result, however, merits Senator Ervin's conclusion that the bill "is as full of unconstitutional, unjust and unwise provisions as a mangy hound dog is full of fleas."

This is too bad because much of what is in that omnibus crime bill is good. As it stands, the bill would give the District of Columbia for the first time its own local court system, uniting under one roof activities that now occur in three separate courts and providing enough judicial manpower to allow the administration of justice to work. It would give the District a Family Court, with tools that might allow Washington to begin to make a dent on the juvenile delinquency which is about to overwhelm the city. All this is desirable.

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But coupled with proposals like those are preventive detention, "no-knock" search authorization, broad wiretapping provisions, mandatory minimum sentences, a reduction in the age limitations of juvenile court, elimination of the right to trial by jury for juveniles, and, of all things, a provision requiring that anyone who sues a policeman for wrongful arrest must pay the officer's fees even if the officer loses the case. These provisions have kept the bill tied up in a conference committee for three months as Senate liberals maneuver to find a way to save the bulk of the bill without having to swallow such affronts to constitutional principles. Whether they can succeed is doubtful and if they don't, the Senate will be faced with a cruel choice – letting another year slip by with nothing done to improve the administration of justice in Washington and taking the rap in an election year of killing anti-crime legislation, or passing the bill with its menagerie of evils and hoping that the courts will find the worst of them unconstitutional.

Dealing With Wallace

There has been strong sentiment within the Administration to placate the white South, and Middle America, on racial matters. Its support of the objective of the Stennis amendment (equalizing desegregation pressures on North and South), the easing up of tax-exemption requirements for private (white) Southern schools, the interventions in court in behalf of delay, the firing of HEW's Leon Panetta, and the nominations of Haynsworth and Carswell are evidence of that. But as one Republican strategist put it after George Wallace's victory in Alabama: "The price for the Southern strategy has just gone up," and the price hardly seems worth paying.

Wallace announced the day after his nomination that he wants state control over the desegregation process or, at the least, a freedom of choice statute that would effectively resegregate many of the South's public schools. But he wants more: repeal of, or no more enforcement of, various civil rights laws; an end to Justice Department suits in behalf of Negroes; appointment of Southern conservatives to key positions in Washington. One can hardly imagine any politically astute President capitulating on those matters. Nixon has said he favors freedom of choice and opposes busing to achieve a racial balance, but that is a long way from abandoning the schools to Southern control and from dismantling the civil rights laws. The President, moreover, could not muster majorities in either house for such actions; nor would the federal courts stand for them.

Nothing Nixon can do will appease Wallace. And no promises Wallace might make about staying out of the '72 race would be worth a confederate dollar. As the defeated Albert Brewer learned, Wallace is as untrustworthy as he is shrewd. He cannot be bought off with federal projects or federal posts for Southerners or delays in school desegregation. He wants to be a national figure, to put down liberals and the "news media" in television interviews.

Different interests are suggesting different ways to treat Wallace. Alabama Democratic Party chairman Robert Vance advocates "some of Moynihan's 'benign neglect,'" to let the South digest what has already been legislated. Vance accurately observes that "it doesn't take a great deal to make the Southern white establishment feel there's been a change in Washington." But that approach smacks of helping the South slow down desegregation. Dr. John Cashin, black chairman of the National Democratic Party of Alabama, thinks, "You're going to have to abandon the white South to Wallace. You don't deal with a man like Wallace. If you do, you wind up getting outsmarted and co-opted."

Alabama blacks have not been united by their defeat. Dr. Cashin shows no interest in trying to make the regular Democratic party a counterweight to Wallaceism, and he intends to run a full slate of NDPA candidates in November. Whether the regular Democrats can convince him and his followers there's a real opening for the blacks in their party between now and '72 is the unanswered question.

Pillsbury's Best

We used to know, or thought we did, what to expect of a man who attends Princeton and the Harvard Business School, pays dues to the Society for the Blind, the Urban League, the Princeton Alumni Association and the Thornhill Country Club, is married, the father of four, and whose hobbies include tennis, skiing and photography, and what to expect of the corporation he works for. But here we have 26 employees in the executive offices of the Pillsbury Company in Minneapolis, who are lunch-hour antiwar activists. In May they formed the Pillsbury Committee to End the War and sent a petition to every congressman and senator supporting the House Resolution 1000 and the McGovern-Hatfield Amendment. In Pillsbury's Information Systems conference room, one noon recently, they met to discuss their work and later heard from the Rev. John Cummins of the Minneapolis First Universalist Church on "US Involvement in Indochina."

The Pillsbury peace group, whose ranks include the company's Director of Public Relations, Louis Gelfand,

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has sought no anonymity; the company is not hostile, says Gelfand. Pillsbury is open to variety and outspokenness, and there is variety among the company's 14,682 employees. Thus, in response to the peace group, 298 employees signed a second petition endorsing Nixon's policy. The signers did not wish the public to think "that a group within the company is attempting to speak for Pillsbury employees in demanding a total ending of the fighting. . . . Emotionalism here at home could get more people killed while only a logistically sound, systematic disengagement will minimize US casualties of troops and noncombatants. We think such a program now exists. We support it."

Gelfand believes the two company organizations are illustrative of the changing character of society: "The hallowed halls of Pillsbury in years past would have crumbled had somebody suggested that people take stands on controversial issues outside the company. But, boy, the company's changed."

Urban Votes

Alexander M. Bickel, via *The New Republic*, is the most prominent of many individuals who argue that replacing the Electoral College with a system of direct Presidential election would weaken the influence of large urban states, thereby weakening the desirable balance of an urban-oriented Presidency against a rural-oriented Congress. Conceding that the Electoral College favors the large states, we nevertheless differ. *Adoption of direct popular Presidential election would further enhance the influence of large states.*

Much of the "urban areas benefit" argument for retaining the Electoral College rests on a computer study performed by John F. Banzhaf III, whose purpose was to determine the "voting power" of individual voters. Defining the key term as "ability, no matter how slight, to affect the outcome of an election," Banzhaf, by means of a series of mathematical calculations, concluded that individual citizens of such large states as New York and California have over two-and-one-half times as much a chance to affect the election of the President as residents of some of the smaller states. Because percentage turn-out is usually greater in the larger states than in the smaller states, however, a typical large state voter's relative chance of influencing the electoral outcome in his state is actually somewhat less than reported by Banzhaf. Nevertheless, we agree with his generalization: there is a tendency for individuals in large states to have more voting power than individuals in small states.

Our basic disagreement is with the way Mr. Bickel has misused the Banzhaf study in an attempt to justify a *status quo* that we, along with John F. Banzhaf, firmly believe is in need of abolition. It does not follow from the fact that an individual in a large state has more "voting power" than an individual in a smaller state that the influence of large states would be lessened if the Electoral College were abolished.

Using the Banzhaf figures and their illustration that a state's Electoral College power is roughly proportional to its Electoral vote, though with a systematic bias giving a slight advantage to the larger states, we note that New York's Electoral College power index is 15.5 times that of Alaska. In the 1968 election, however, New Yorkers cast 6,791,687 Presidential votes while Alaskans cast only 83,035; thus New Yorkers cast 81.8 times as many votes as Alaskans. If a system of popular Presidential election were substituted for the Electoral College, New York's relative potential to influence the election's outcome would be more than five times greater than is now the case. The state of California now has 14.3 times the influence of Alaska. But if the restriction of the Electoral College had been removed in 1968, California would have had potentially 87.3 times the influence of Alaska – 6.1 times as great as its present effect.

A candidate who now spends much of his time campaigning in large states would spend even more time and energy in those states if their potential to affect the outcome of the election were quintupled or sextupled. After all, in 1968 *all* of Alaska's popular vote would have constituted less than 1.15 percent of California's popular vote. And the comparisons apply to more than New York or California vs. Alaska, for although the 12 largest states had but 1.14 times the Electoral College power of the other 38 states in 1968, their popular vote was 1.58 times that of the smaller 38 – a potential gain of about 40 percent. Such results, finally, are obtained even when comparing the more populous of the small states to the less populous. Under the Electoral College, Hawaii has 1.3 times the power of Alaska; under a system of direct popular election in 1968 Hawaii would have had potentially 2.8 times the power of Alaska.

If the Electoral College were abolished the voting power of all individual voters would be equal. While the relative voting power of individuals in large states would diminish, the larger states themselves would be the target of even more candidate attention and effort, for even relatively small percentages of the large states' popular vote would exceed the totals received in smaller states. In thus forcing Presidential candidates to orient their campaign toward the more populous states, direct popular election would increase the Presidency's urban orientation. Mr. Bickel draws his conclusions on the relative influence of states by examining the relative influence of individuals. We draw our conclusions on the relative influence of states by examining the relative influence of states.

Jeffrey W. Wides & David W. Stotlar

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Tydings of No Joy

While not susceptible of proof, a plausible hypothesis is that the unhappiest person in a lunatic asylum would be the one sane man. It is a tribute to his strength of mind that Senator Joseph Davies Tydings resists what must sometimes be considerable temptation to see himself in that role. His efforts as chairman of the Senate Committee on the District of Columbia to restrain crime and to foster family planning have led some blacks to call him a fascist pig bent on genocide. And, because Tydings is also pushing for saner gun laws, lavish displays of posters and bumper stickers paid for by you-know-who tell Maryland voters, "If Tydings wins, you lose." What? Their guns; therefore, they seem to fear, their manhood. Both fears are groundless; nevertheless Tydings, a self-confessed liberal, is now being depicted as a castrator as well. Tydings is Maryland's senior senator and faces in September a primary fight with George P. Mahoney, a Democrat who is an eight-times loser and is so far from being a liberal that in 1966 Spiro T. Agnew won the governorship from him largely by appearing to be by contrast a moderate. Mahoney is counting confidently on gun lobby backing. Should Mahoney lose a ninth time, the gun lobby doubtless will back Republican J. Glenn Beall Jr. against Tydings in November.

Unregistered guns killed two of Tydings' close friends, John and Robert F. Kennedy. The 1968 Gun Control Act is a flop; only three states require gun licenses and in 35 states, lunatics may legally own guns. Tydings wants guns registered *and* licensed. His assurances, to hunters that this will not interfere with sport and to collectors of antique guns that these won't count, have failed to abate the trumped-up hysteria against Tydings' modest proposals; so have Tydings' terrible statistics – 99,000 armed robberies annually, more than doubled since 1964, and 9000 Americans shot to death willfully each year.

As a former United States Attorney, Tydings knows about crime statistics. He knows for instance that the chance is eight to one against the person committing a serious crime being arrested, and 16 to one against conviction. Last year in the District of Columbia, 56,419 felonies were reported (and many more committed) but the ratio of convictions was only 2.5 percent. Most of the D.C. victims are poor blacks. Their chance of being robbed is five times greater than other people's, and four times greater of being raped. Tydings in 1966 co-sponsored the Bail Reform Act, hoping to rescue poor suspects from the extortions of the professional bondsmen who soak them. He now says the reform failed. Some poor people accused of crime are held in jail, before trial, by judges who set bond high. At the same time, of every eleven persons released on bail, one is rearrested and charged with a new crime, while still awaiting trial on the earlier charge. Tydings proposes that in certain cases arrested persons with criminal records may be held in jail without bail up to 30 days, but then be brought to trial. A man accused of brutal rape would not be able to go straight back and try to bash the woman's head in for telling, as has happened. Tydings would like top organized criminals, the Mafia and especially narcotics wholesalers, to get life sentences. On the other hand, he wants probation for first offenders caught with drugs, and treatment and cure for addicts. To pay for their habit, addicts either steal or they push dope. Thefts by addicts add up to about $400 million yearly in the Washington, D.C. area alone. Putting addicts on methadone would cost less than 10 cents per head a day. Tydings feels the Nixon Administration is stingy about funding treatment and cure of drug addicts and alcoholics.

Tydings' crime proposals have undammed floods of criticism, especially as the senator also supports a form of "no-knock" authority for police to enter premises, in quest of drugs or other crime. Not everyone calls Tydings a racist. Rational critics concede that his no-knock provision is more circumspect than current practice – police do now enter without knocking, largely at their own discretion; Tydings would compel them to seek a judge's specific sanction. But the critics say that instead of asking for pre-trial detention, Tydings should work for speedier trials. Tydings replies that he is doing that too, but the courts are hopelessly clogged and won't unclog soon.

The senator has written a book, *Born to Starve*, to expose his views on population control. He says that 5.4 million American women who are poor don't want large families and do want family planning assistance, but fewer than 800,000 get it. The Nixon Administration has adopted elimination of unwanted births as a national goal, but Tydings is urging larger financial provision, $984,000 over five years. His less rational accusers blow up over his family planning stand. Some blacks say he's a rich white who aims to sterilize the black poor; others profess shock at his proposal to leave abortion "to individual conscience." If he politically survives the attacks generated by what seems to be everyone else's castration syndrome, Tydings may look good in 1972, when he will be only 44. Many of his liberal ideas march with those of Senator McGovern – and of Senator Ted Kennedy. Tydings would also fit a Muskie ticket, or a Hughes ticket. But sometimes, reading his hate mail, Tydings becomes a bit glum. The storm that is being worked up against him in his state is contrived by the gun lobby in part because he is a liberal, and people who fear and hate liberal views readily believe that Tydings is plotting to disarm them so as to leave them helpless prey of vaguely glimpsed powers of evil. But, meanwhile, Tydings' efforts to protect poor and black people from the criminals who prey on them are rudely rebuffed.

Alex Campbell

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Farm Payments

A decision on farm price supports can't be delayed long enough for most members of Congress, and can't come too soon for the farmers, since they are already plowing for the 1971 harvest in the Great Plains and the Pacific Northwest. The programs in operation since 1965 expire this year.

Both the total level of farm spending, and the size of federal payments to a few giant farmers will be prime targets when a new bill is debated this summer. Payments this year come to about $3.7 billion and are rising. Total farm program spending is higher, however, and in Budget Bureau jargon, is "uncontrollable" – beyond review. Cotton growers get the most, almost $1 billion a year, which is nearly equal to the market value of the entire US cotton crop, and they get most of the big payments ($4 million a year for one California corporation). Half the $3.7 billion in federal payments goes to fewer than 200,000 big farmers, eight percent of the total. The other half goes to 2,300,000 smaller farmers.

Secretary of Agriculture Hardin has been sparring for more than a year with the Southern-dominated House Committee on Agriculture, searching for a "Consensus Farm Bill" that will never be found. The collective views of the House of Representatives and its Committee on Agriculture are fundamentally incompatible. Any farm bill representing the *real* views of the agrarian Southern and Midwestern members can pass only when most urban members are absent. The House Committee expected to report a bill June 2, but deadlocked when provisions opposed by the Administration were adopted. The draft bill is considerably worse than present law: federal costs and crop surpluses would increase; administrative discretion to set price supports and farm payments may be reduced; the cotton section, as always, is an ingenious raid on the Treasury. Secretary Hardin has promised that there will be no reductions in total farm program spending. Payments to big farmers will not be curbed by the Committee – though the House has twice voted overwhelmingly to put a ceiling on those payments.

The Administration is in a bind; thus far it has not strongly supported anything, and nearly all the farm organizations oppose what has been drafted. The Secretary hasn't gone far enough to win over the farmers, though he may have gone too far for urban legislators. A vote against farm subsidies can improve a candidate's reelection prospects in the city, since he can point out that the money saved could be diverted to health care, narcotics control, or rapid transit. And congressmen who chafe against Southern and Midwestern opposition to civil rights legislation may vote against subsidies simply to settle old scores. Orville Freeman was often able to convince city Democrats that they should vote for one more farm bill, but he is no longer Secretary of Agriculture. There is no one around in 1970 to rebuild the coalition of urban and Southern Democrats, plus farm-state Republicans.

Urban members should take the lead in trying to find a compromise solution. Congress should place an upper limit of $10,000 on crop payments to any farmer, set a ceiling on *total* farm payments, and release cotton from its straitjacket of acreage controls. No bill without those features deserves approval. By this action Congress would withdraw windfalls from giant farms, mainly in the Cotton Belt, and provide full protection to small family farmers, thus helping to insure that the farm economy will continue to be stabilized, and that high priority public programs will not be aborted by open-ended farm spending.

John Schnittker

The Nixon Watch

Updating Welfare

The chubby face of Russell Long of Louisiana, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, was aglow with righteous intent and goodwill when he said on May 1, at the close of the first phase of hearings on the Nixon welfare reforms: "We do want to pass this bill. We would like to pass a bill which takes into consideration everything that private employers can be expected to do, everything that state governments can be expected to do, everything that other federal agencies can be expected to do, as a result of this overall effort." Senator John J. Williams of Delaware, a renowned Republican champion of thrift and efficiency who retires this year, said that existing federal and state welfare aids to the poor "must all be considered and taken together" in any reform bill that he would support. Health, Education and Welfare Secretary Robert H. Finch, who had no idea then that he would be replaced within six weeks, protested that "we cannot solve all of these problems" with the bill before the committee. But he promised that after further study "we will come forward with a broader something . . . and work with you to have an omnibus bill to work out this problem."

The "broader something" that emerged in mid-June from weeks of frantic effort at the White House, HEW, the Budget Bureau and the Departments of Labor and Agriculture is not the "omnibus bill" that the Senate committee compelled Finch to promise. It is, instead, a mix of hasty amendments to the Nixon welfare bill as it was passed by the House and of a promise to come up by next February 15 with additional legislation. But it must be granted that the Administration's new proposals constitute the "historic" advance in welfare policy that White House Counsellor Daniel P. Moynihan

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said they do. They should but may not save the original Nixon program of guaranteed minimal income for welfare and "working poor" families from the sudden death that both Republicans and Democrats on the Finance Committee seemed to be preparing for it in May.

Whether the family assistance plan survives, and whether the proposed addition to it of the nation's first federally subsidized system of health insurance for the poor has a chance of enactment next year, depends mainly upon Senators Long, Williams, and Herman Talmadge of Georgia. They are the committeemen who principally forced the Administration to take back its family income bill and reconcile it with related food-stamp, housing and medical programs. If these senators don't buy the offered mixture, and they were slow to say whether they would or not, the revised family income bill will either die in the committee or come out of it so changed that the House will be unlikely to accept the altered version. Chances of reviving the Nixon income guarantee in the new Congress that convenes next year will be dim, and the prospects of combining it with subsidized insurance will be even dimmer if both programs have to be sold in one enormous package. That is why it was said at the White House that "we are dead serious about wanting a bill this year" and that, if only the Finance Committee will allow the Senate to act upon a reasonable facsimile of the Nixon welfare bill, the Administration will be "prepared to go as far as anybody wants to go in the Congresses to come" with further welfare refinements.

The miracle of the congressional session is that the House Ways and Means Committee and then the full House approved the Nixon income measure with few substantive changes, none of them destructive and many of them improvements. The man who wrought the miracle is Wilbur Mills of Arkansas, chairman of Ways and Means, and he is quietly abetting the Administration in its warnings to the Senate Finance Committee that it had better leave what he has come to think of as *his* bill largely intact if any welfare reform is to be enacted this year. The House bill preserves the basic guarantee that every family of one or two parents and one or more dependent children will have some cash income, paid in federal dollars, from a minimum of $800 for one parent and one dependent child to $1600 for the "family of four" (two parents, two children) that is cited as the typical example. Earned income up to $720 a year and half of any further earned income up to a "poverty level" varying with the size of the family may be retained by "the working poor" without deduction from the basic $500 for each adult and $300 for each dependent child that the federal government guarantees. The House eliminated a requirement that niggardly states, meaning those in the Deep South, continue to put up at least half of what they had been paying in state welfare costs, and several of them are now relieved of the painful necessity of contributing a penny to their welfare families, most of them black. But this concession is offset by substantial increases in what they would have to pay to assist dependent aged, blind and disabled adults, and on balance the Southern states get less relative benefit from increased federal welfare contributions than do the states – California, Illinois and New York, for example – that have the most generous assistance programs and the heaviest costs. The requirement that employable family heads, excepting mothers with children under six years of age, must register for and accept any "suitable" jobs or training for jobs, remains in the bill and has been tightened since the Administration proposed it. This feature continues to disturb some liberal defenders of the bill, but the protections against arbitrary abuse of the power to determine what is "suitable" have been strengthened, at least in theory, and the word itself though not the intent was dropped from the House bill.

The Senate committee complaints that resulted in the innovative insurance proposal were originally aimed at removing anomalies which, as the critics showed from the Administration's data, make total dependence upon welfare more profitable in an embarrassing number of cases than working for a part of a poor family's income would be. In too many instances, the Administration's witnesses had to admit, very small increases in earned income could and did render welfare beneficiaries ineligible for assistance ranging from food-stamps to rental subsidies and federal-state Medicaid. In response, the Administration proposes to meld the food-stamp program with family assistance, transfer it from Agriculture to HEW, and provide that the small portion of food-stamp costs charged to beneficiaries may be deducted from their basic welfare payments. Instead of chopping off rent subsidies and the right to live in public housing at an arbitrary level of earned income, the proportion of the subsidized rent paid by the renting families would rise with increasing incomes. For the wholly dependent families now eligible for free medical care in states that have adopted Medicaid, a wholly new program of subsidized insurance would be substituted and "working poor" families who now get no public help at all would be eligible for it, too. Between five and six million families including 25 to 30 million individuals would be covered, at an estimated federal cost beginning at $1.9 billion a year in fiscal 1972 and rising to $2.8 billion by 1975. Many details still have to be worked out and submitted in the legislation promised by next February. But the outline is clear in the proposal as it emerged in June.

It offers benefitted families up to $500 worth of more or less comprehensive insurance, including hospital and some out-patient care, on the scale that a private buyer of medical insurance gets for $500 a year. For families with no income or (for the "typical" family of four) no more than $1600 a year, the insurance would be free and paid entirely by the federal govern-

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ment. For families with higher incomes (between $1600 and $3920 for the same family of four), participation would be compulsory and up to $160 of the $500 annual premium would be deducted from their federal income supplements. For those with incomes above $3920 and up to a cut-off point of $5620 a year, participation would be voluntary and those at the top of the scale would have to pay the full $500 if they chose the coverage. If the compulsory deduction from assistance payments to the middle-poor bothers Congress, the Administration is prepared to recommend a compensatory increase of $100 in the basic level of federal income supplements. How the enormous increase in the demand for medical services that would result is to be met is a problem the Administration leaves to future solution. That and many other questions are sure to be raised. But they are outweighed by the real significance of the proposal, which is that it puts the country on the way to the comprehensive national health care that should have been instituted long ago.

John Osborne

Here's Vietnamization

Can Thieu Hold On?

Saigon

With between 2.5 and 3.5 million people, Saigon now far exceeds Tokyo, its nearest world rival for population density. From the air, it is a vast sea of roofing with only thin ribbons of streets. There are no yards even for the rich. Housing is built over, under, beside and, as crowding continues to grow more acute, even within existing houses. It is the rule, not the exception, for ten or more to exist in a single room. If there is plumbing of even the most rudimentary sort in a building or group of buildings it is community plumbing. If one residence is an electric subscriber officially, the others are unofficially; they pay the legal subscriber inflated rates to avoid installation charges. There is no room in the home for other than sleeping and eating, if that; the children are squeezed out the doorways, the walkways and onto the streets where they share space with the best and worst, and with a creeping mass of automobiles, trucks and motorcycles. Once the Paris of the East, Saigon is now literally a vast slum.

There are no meaningful statistics on the crime rate; the police are too busy with political control and surveillance to monitor any but the grossest criminal offenses. Murders are chalked up to "VC terrorism"; armed robbery, muggings, burglary and thefts of autos and motorcycles hardly warrant investigation. Bicycle thefts aren't any longer reported. The children learn that money and things are where you steal them. Tens of thousands of children have abandoned their families (or vice versa) and taken up residence on the streets and in the alleyways as mendicant shoeshine boys, beggars, pickpockets, car clouters and prostitutes. The schools don't know and don't care because they're already full to overflowing, and school is a luxury of wealth.

Opium and harder addicts stumble through Saigon, begging their way toward the next fix that can be had openly and openly administered. The children pause only momentarily to watch the needle sink into scarred arms and legs. Street children brag of their own experimentation.

Rich folk get rich, the poor and middle class struggle with an inflation best described as just short of runaway. Even the traditional middle class of Vietnam, the civil servants, curse their employer, the state, and its American paymaster. There is no redress. On every side are the police. Tens of thousands (perhaps hundreds of thousands – those who care can't find out and those who know don't care) are already in prison, or worse, for objecting. And on top of all else, Vietnam is at the mercy, both literally and figuratively, of foreigners.

Distrust has replaced old friendships of a more hopeful time, and personal accusations of general responsibility in Vietnam's humiliation have replaced discussion. Long-time foreign residents who took long walks through the city now ride to avoid thrown rocks and garbage. The Vietnamese wife of an American journalist tells of screamed anti-American and government obscenities as she and friends, an American and an Indian, helped wounded people from a Pagoda attacked by government agents. "It's everywhere and all the time now," she says. "The Vietnamese are even refusing to speak Vietnamese to strange foreigners who can speak the language. All the Americans I know are becoming afraid and their Vietnamese friends are afraid for them."

And a social worker adds, "For the mass of people anything is better than this hopelessness . . . all these words they've been forced to listen to for years."

Saigon's air, already fetid from the open sewers and swamps, heavy with carbon monoxide, alive with unbelievable noise, is now further enriched by the constant presence of tear gas. As a Saigon resident says, "Every time the police see more than two students walking on the street together they throw gas."

On Wednesday, June 3, Saigon's dailies announced in concert that they would suspend publication in protest against the "persistent repression of students" by the government. In the joint communique they said they considered student grievances justified and wanted the release of the student leaders recently arrested. Which grievances were justified was not stated. Schools which had been closed by government edict on May 6 to keep students from gathering were ordered reopened, but students by the thousands refused to return to

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classes and the clashes with police continue. In a tactic reminiscent of American student protest, Saigon students are going from door to door distributing their anti-government literature to what is described as "an eager public."

Is this then the revolt within a revolt against the government that will topple it? Or will it die ignominiously as the 1966 Buddhist Struggle Movement did? Overt support on the streets for revolt, where the more radical of the activists believe it counts (they fear a coup by power-hungry members of the current regime, with only a shift in faces), still has not developed widely enough to draw any conclusions on the ultimate success of bringing down the government – and not just Thieu. Disparate political and social groups have their own timetables. Thieu and company's problem is to isolate the currently committed groups without upsetting the fragile balance of fear and tension in the city. Some students and observers of Vietnam are betting he can't do it this time.

D. E. Ronk

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The War and White Ethnic Groups

Turning Off "The People"

by Andrew N. Greeley

It doesn't take those patriotic parades of "hard hats" to demonstrate that there is immense dissatisfaction in the country with "radical protest." And it is not new. One study of the 1968 election showed that only about a tenth of the population supported the Chicago demonstrators, despite the rather favorable presentation the protests got in the mass media. Only about a quarter of those identified as "doves" on Vietnam disapproved of the behavior of the Chicago police. About three-quarters of the general population approved of the Chicago conspiracy trial. Similarly, the outrage in academia not withstanding, it appears that more than half of the American people blame the Kent State killings on the students themselves!

However virtuous the present radical movement may be, it has turned off somewhere between 60 and 90 percent of the American people. To put the matter bluntly, one could make a persuasive case that a large segment of the organized peace movement has been self-defeating – if its goal is to make converts. William Kuntsler, David Dellinger, Abbie Hoffman, Daniel Berrigan, Dr. Spock and Noam Chomsky may be folk heroes among intellectual elites and a substantial number of the young; they are *not* folk heroes among the white ethnics or, one suspects, among a substantial majority of the country. If white ethnic groups (not all of them "blue collar" by any means) are told in effect that to support peace he must support the Black Panthers, women's liberation, drugs, free love, Dr. Spock, long hair, and picketing clergymen, he may find it very difficult to put himself on the antiwar side.

We may dismiss the white ethnics' loyalty to the country as quaint and old fashioned, as super-patriotism, but that does not make it any less powerful. Most of these people are the children or grandchildren of peasant immigrants who had behind them centuries of landlessness and oppression in Europe. Through hard work (as they see it) they have obtained land, home, financial stability of a sort, and personal freedom. From their point of view, a nation which makes possible both financial security and personal freedom for so many of its citizens *deserves* vigorous defense. To those who point out that we still have our poor and oppressed, the white ethnics respond that they, too, were once poor and oppressed but managed to struggle their way up the economic and social ladder.

The white ethnic, then, simply cannot understand why the children of the well-to-do are so eager to "knock" American society. Hasn't that society permitted them a "college education"? Granting that there are social wrongs, even granting that the war might be a mistake, the white ethnic is appalled at the hatred for the United States that he observes (on the television screen) among young radicals and some of their faculty patrons. Burning the American flag or waving the Vietcong flag may be an exciting or an exhilarating experience for the son of a well-to-do family, but it's an astonishing and disgusting spectacle to a white ethnic. I don't know the exact cost to the peace movement of burning the American flag or waving the Vietcong

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flag, but my impression is that these incidents have been of extraordinary symbolic importance.

Anti-Communism is now unfashionable among the American intellectual elite (which is not to say that it might not become fashionable again at some later date). The revisionist historians now would persuade us that the cold war was mostly of American doing. Others who are not willing to go quite that far, point out the disunity in the international Communist movement and observe that given the schism between China and Russia (and the many lesser schisms all about the Communist world) it is no longer meaningful to speak of an "international Communist conspiracy." These arguments are far too subtle to gain much credence among the white ethnics. In their perspective, it was the international Communist conspiracy that blighted the bright hopes of peace after the Second World War, which dragged us into the Korean "police action," and which is responsible for the present conflict in Vietnam. The white ethnics read the newspapers and know about Hungary, the Berlin Wall, and Czechoslovakia, and wonder how anyone can doubt the Communist menace. They are also painfully aware that many of their old homelands are under Communist control and will be until the "captive nations" are "free." It comes as a surprise to many liberal intellectuals to be told that Poles, Lithuanians, Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, Estonians, Latvians, and Ukranians accept the Moscow-controlled regimes in these countries about as cheerfully as American Jews would accept Nasser's armies of occupation in Tel Aviv.

Such an attitude may be unrealistic, unappreciative of the complexities of international diplomacy or of the economic progress made in some of the "Iron Curtain" countries in the last quarter-century; it is nevertheless an extremely important reality for American ethnics. For many of them, the same people who "betrayed" the Captive Nations are now advocating "surrender" in Vietnam.

The Establishment, too, is seen quite differently by the white ethnics and student radicals or their faculty supporters. From the perspective of the Polish TV watcher on Milwaukee Avenue on the northwest side of Chicago, the long-haired militants are every bit as much part of the Establishment as are the presidents of corporations, Wall Street investment bankers, and other Anglo-Saxon and Jewish members of the power elite. In their frame of reference, Richard Nixon to some extent, and Spiro Agnew, to a very considerable extent, are *anti*-Establishment figures, and someone like David Dellinger with his Yale degree is an Establishment personage. They see the protesters and the militants as sons and daughters of the well-to-do, who have attended elite colleges and are supported financially by their parents through all their radical activity. A Harvard graduate is, after all, a Harvard graduate whether in a picket line or in a board room of a large corporation. The peace movement is seen as an Establishment movement, working against the values, the stability, and the patriotism of the American masses – which masses, incidentally, are seen as footing the bill for Establishment games and amusements.

American ethnics are deeply troubled at what they consider to be the "changing of the rules," a phrase I have heard over and over again. *They* had to work to achieve the social position they presently occupy, but other groups in American society are demanding these positions as a matter of right. *Their* children had to pass entrance exams to get into college; other men's children (they think) do not. *Their* fathers had to work long hours to support their families; other men's fathers seemingly did not. *They* fought bravely to defend America in World War II and in the Korean War, and now it is being alleged that those who fight and die in wars are immoral or foolish. *They* lived according to the American ethic of sobriety and respectability, and now they see on TV the spectacle of the drug smoking hippie at a rock festival. In other words, the white ethnic feels that he is being told that the rules no longer apply, that others are to achieve what he has achieved (frequently, it seems to him, with his picking up the tab) by doing exactly the opposite of what the rules prescribed.

There is obviously something incomplete, perhaps something paranoiac, about this "change of rules" analysis. But Mr. Agnew's success is the mark of the plausibility it enjoys. He who wishes to make converts to the cause of peace among those who think the rules are changing has his work cut out for him.

I must confess that I have rather little confidence that such persuasion is going to occur. The intellectual and moral strains among the liberal elite groups run directly counter to strains in the white ethnics and other members of middle America. Not to put too fine an edge on the matter, the liberal elites are strongly tempted to view white ethnics with profound contempt. The elites are far better educated, far more articulate, far better informed, far more sophisticated and, in their heart of hearts, convinced that they are far superior morally. The white ethnic might not himself be a "pig," but he probably has brothers or cousins or uncles who are "pigs," and one simply does not try to make converts among pigs.

If one were trying to convert substantial segments of the white ethnic population to the cause of peace, it would not be hard to outline some components of the strategy:

► Peace must be separated from the peace movement, particularly from its radical fringes. Militant protests, demonstrations and marches are what peace does not need. One is appalled at the risk of self-defeat involved in the closing down of school before the next

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election. My own hunch is that white ethnics will not be at all offended by youthful political activity, but they will be offended by the "changing of the rule" implied in a shutdown of schools to permit campaigning. After all, no one shuts down their factories or their offices so *they* can campaign. Demonstrations, protests and violence during the last two weeks of the campaign (and given the nature of American extremists at present, such actions are almost inevitable) will make matters worse. My own fear would be that a Children's Crusade during the last two weeks of October would virtually guarantee one of the biggest right-wing majorities in Congress since the 1920s.

► Appeals for peace should be rooted in American patriotism rather than in "hate America" rhetoric. Unquestionably, there is a chauvinistic, if not imperialist, strain in our tradition, but there is also an altruistic one. It should, I think, be emphasized that we have honored – always in theory and frequently in practice – the principle of self-determination for small countries. It could also be emphasized that America's claim to be a first-rate power could scarcely be an issue in Vietnam, and that indeed the measure of greatness in the contemporary world is that a nation is able to permit other nations to make their own decisions. As a matter of fact, it might be argued that only a very strong and powerful nation can afford to get out of a war without winning complete victory. Even in the War of 1812, America settled for something less than complete victory, rather than needlessly prolong a foolish conflict. In the Mexican-American War we did not choose to conquer all of Mexico, though we could have done so. In the Spanish-American War, while we had mixed feelings about Cuba and the Philippines, we were willing to permit them, more or less, to go their own way. Emphasis, then, on the altruistic strain in the American tradition should be more helpful in winning converts among the white ethnics than emphasis on Professor Chomsky's assertion that we are the most imperialistic country that ever existed, an assertion which has historical problems of its own.

► It also seems to me that a point can be made that the United States is under no obligation, indeed ought not to try, to defend another country that is not capable of or interested in providing for its own defense, a notion which I gather is currently called the Nixon Doctrine, though 25 years ago it was called the Truman Doctrine. It could thus be argued that the mistake was not so much trying to resist Communism in Vietnam, as trying to do it by ourselves, the South Vietnamese being either unwilling or unable to do so. It might be asserted that it is their war and not our war, and that it was a mistake on our part ever to take it over and make it our war. One could at least say that if the South Vietnamese government is not able to fend for itself now, it never will be.

► It might also be asserted that at least some objectives in Vietnam were achieved; India, Thailand, and especially Indonesia are now much more secure from Communist takeover than they were in the early 1960s. There is little doubt that this claim would be true about Indonesia, perhaps somewhat more doubtful about Thailand. But at least some kind of case could be made for the position.

The important point about this last argument is that it is counterproductive to describe the war as a complete waste. Too many white ethnics (and others, too, for that matter) have lost relatives in the war to be able to accept the notion that it was a total loss. On a more subtle level, I think one could reasonably argue that many lessons have been learned by the United States which will not be soon forgotten (though, heaven knows, a lot of people said after Korea that we would never get involved in a land war in Asia, much less a guerrilla war), but I do not think these subtle arguments will be very effective with white ethnics. Thus, one is forced to take the stand that perhaps some good things were accomplished.

All of these approaches may seem weak, if not dishonest. I would reply that weak they may be, but reality is too complex, too ambiguous, and too uncertain for any definitive judgment to be made today about all the functions and dysfunctions of Vietnam. Dysfunctions aplenty there were, but it will take the historians of the future to perceive them clearly. It is surely true that the enthusiasts of the peace movement at the present time, and even many of us who are not part of the formal peace movement, see the war as a clear-cut disaster from every possible viewpoint, with few, if any, mitigating qualities. And yet if that be the case, it is one of the few major events in human history which is not shrouded in mitigating ambiguity and complexity. My only suggestion is that if one wishes to engage in any dialogue with the white ethnics, one must be prepared not to dismiss them as blind or immoral because they do not see the issues quite as clearly as we do, but rather to try to sympathetically understand the complexities and ambiguities as *they* see them.

I rather doubt that this will take place, if only because I am not persuaded that the elite groups in American society have the humility or the patience or even the personal security necessary to try to establish, or perhaps reestablish, dialogue with the rest of the nation. There seems to be some extremely important payoff in being alienated from the larger society, indeed, even in suspecting the "fascist mass" is out to get you. One cannot escape the impression that some commentators are eagerly awaiting an "era of repression" so that they can experience the same kind of "subpoena envy" they experienced in the McCarthy era. Why intellectual elites take secret pleasure in the fantasy of Slavic stormtroopers pounding on their doors is an important subject, but beyond the subject of this article.

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HOLLYWOOD

Shivering in the Sun

by William Fadiman

Its former oligarchic empire shattered and fragmented, its once powerful studio structure splintered into dozens of small companies and individual units, Hollywood is being assailed from every side: abdication of its overlords, exodus of its creators, rising costs, loss of customers, the mounting appeal of television, dissatisfaction with its censorship code and competition from foreign films. Hollywood has put up the For Sale sign and a buyer has been found in the conglomerates. Oddly enough, what they have bought no longer exists, for Hollywood is not any longer the film capital of the world. If there were a film capital, it would not be Hollywood, what with the Motion Picture Relief Fund announcing on April 30 the existence of a "crisis . . . a tragic unemployment situation coupled with the increasing needs of those out of work"; it would not be Hollywood with its dozens of empty stages and over 42 percent of its normal work force thronging the unemployment lines in Van Nuys, Santa Monica and Los Angeles.

This does not mean that film production has come to a halt. On the contrary, it is taking place all over the globe. Rome is Hollywood, London is Hollywood, Shanghai is Hollywood, New York is Hollywood, and so is Burning Stump, Arkansas as itinerant producers set up shop wherever the locale and economic advantages are most attractive.

Hollywood once created and cultivated a mystique which transformed the very name into a synonym for glamour. The only surviving realities are its extraordinary talent and technical resources, but both are leaving for greener pastures. Whether or not the new businessmen proprietors can reconstruct even a modest replica of this empire of entertainment is dubious.

In the old days, producers as well as performers, writers and directors were employed by the studios on long-term contracts at guaranteed wages. While this system flourished the studios had to have as many films as possible manufactured beneath their own roofs to support their heavy overhead. This permitted an orderly and controllable flow of product at all times. It also enforced the making of assembly-line productions ordained and supervised by executive fiat from The Front Office Staff. The salaried producer was consulted, rarely heeded, always subservient. But it is significant to note that for a variety of reasons, this factory-fashioned, stereotyped, studio-dictated product brought with it Hollywood's greatest prosperity.

The producer is no longer a salaried flunkey; he is more often a part-owner of his own picture. He may still derive some or even all of his financial sponsorship from the studios, but he is not an employee. His risks are greater, but so is his freedom. In a number of instances the studio merely acts as a distributor, in which case the producer's only obligation is to deliver the finished film. Emboldened by this new emancipation, the producer in pursuit of long-sought autonomy is rejecting studio-based production. This rejection of Hollywood automatically removes him and his product from the supervision of the new conglomerate bosses and renders their task more difficult.

Strengthening the film-maker's decision to abandon Hollywood is his inability to cope with mounting costs of local production. According to the Motion Picture Association of America, the required expenditure for an individual picture has risen by over 50 percent since 1961. These increases are on all levels: the amounts paid for stories, the price of raw stock, the fees for advertising and exploitation, the cost of prints, the payment to performers, producers, writers, directors, and executives, and most onerous of all, the wage scale of the numerous union-protected craftsmen and technicians needed to mount a film.

Conditioned by past prosperity, caught in the crush of inflation, the unions have done little to make producing in Hollywood more feasible. Beyond publizing their plight with the slogan "repatriation or ruin," the unions' efforts to preserve Hollywood have been insubstantial. Such minor concessions as they have granted apply principally to low-budget pictures and are not sizable enough to compete with the lower labor costs elsewhere. The actors too have modified some of their proscriptive regulations, but again, these changes are relatively minuscule. Increasing the cost problems, the writers have launched a campaign for higher salaries and greater economic protection. In any event, since a large proportion of the budget of a film is dependent upon labor charges, it is easy to realize why it is cheaper to make a picture where union solidarity and high wages have not yet taken root. It is safe to say that it costs less to produce pictures away from Hollywood, anyplace in the US where wages

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paid extras are not governed by unions. It is even more beneficial overseas, where co-productions with foreign nationals aided by government subsidies offer a saving of approximately 15 percent to American producers. Hollywood has never found a way to counter this. It is doubtful whether the conglomerates can be any more sucessful.

Endeavors to solve the problem of the stupendous salaries paid stars have taken two forms. A formula has been advanced in which the star receives a profit participation rather than an outright sum. But profit participation (barring that rarity, a runaway smash film), diminishes the producer's share by the precise percentage he has relinquished and offers him only the temporary advantage of not disbursing a large amount at the initial stage of his venture. Also, the stars themselves have by no means given unanimous approval to this method of payment, frequently countering it by demanding – and getting – a percentage of the gross box-office revenue rather than gambling on future profits. The second suggestion by Hollywood's new masters is more drastic: eliminate the star system *in toto*. Apparently heartened by the success of a number of pictures without famous players, a conclusion has been drawn that stars are no longer a prerequisite to profits.

While it is true that several star-less films have had an extraordinary audience reception, the very popularity of these films with unknown actors has created a public demand for their appearance in succeeding pictures and has catapulted them from low-salary obscurity into high-salary fame. The vaulting salary demands of John Voight, Dustin Hoffman, Dennis Hopper or Mia Farrow (cheerfully being met by the same moguls who clamor for low-budget star-less films) are already approaching the towering figures paid the former Establishment luminaries. Any attempt to extirpate this hagiolatry is marked for failure. The current audience inclination to patronize films without celebrity names is a phase, not a trend. Whatever else may change in Hollywood, the stars will continue. The public has made that decision.

Another threat confronting Hollywood's new chieftains lies in a serious and persistent reduction in the quantity of moviegoers. Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America, has noted "the public's regular [meaning habitual] moviegoing attendance is decreasing." What was once a habit has become an occasion made possible only by two kinds of films. One is the movie receiving extraordinary attention, stimulated by shrewd and costly exploitation. The second includes pictures of a highly libidinous or pornographic nature. Once upon a time people went to the movies to see anything. As patrons became more sophisticated, they became more selective, but by this time television had begun to strengthen its bid for attention and in consequence selection became a mere matter of turning a dial. Wryly enough, motion pictures still remain among the most favored programs on television. Mutilated and distorted though they are by the arbitrary insertion of commercials, the home viewer seemingly does not mind. His rationale is simple: why pay for a film when you can see it for nothing? Thus, whereas 40 million Americans attend the movies once a week, there are 135 million who see television daily in 56 million homes and a high percentage of them are looking at movies. Motion pictures consume 15 percent of what Madison Avenue dubs prime time and the figure is rising – hardly comforting news to Hollywood's present proprietors.

The easy accessibility of television has always been a powerful enemy of the neighborhood theater; but its potency as a box-office menace has been intensified by the introduction of two new elements. The first is the relatively rapid presentation of theatrical films on television, sometimes even less than two years after their initial local appearance. The second weapon is the manufacture of films made directly for the small screen, films never destined for theatrical distribution in America at all. A considerable portion of this latter group is being produced by television companies themselves, using their own facilities, so voracious is their demand for product. These films are fabricated at a modest cost compared to major studio charges, for television-trained personnel use shorter shooting schedules and are less meticulous. Incidently, any lack of quality in these films-for-television is irrelevant to the nonpaying customer. The situation is ironic; more people than ever before are seeing Hollywood films, but most of them are not paying for the privilege.

But hasn't Hollywood been paid thumping sums for these films? No longer. The river of gold is drying up at the source. In its early stages, frantic for product, television offered colossal sums for the right to show old films. Since most of them had long outlived their profit potential on theater screens, Hollywood rushed their wares to this new market place. Whole libraries of films, representing decades of production, were sold. Conditions have changed. The major studios have long since stripped themselves of the bulk of their

COMING: Christopher Jencks explains the proposal to give parents money to pay for their children's schooling

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salable films. The purchase of Hollywood films by television still continues, but it provides only a very modest source of income. Current smash-hit pictures will still receive very high prices when available for purchase by the networks, but these are few and far between. In the meantime Hollywood has almost nothing to sell to television. An empty film vault is hardly an asset, as the conglomerates are beginning to realize.

They are also beginning to comprehend the significance of the new censorship rulings embodied in the November 1968 Code of Self-Regulation of the Motion Picture Association of America. Hollywood was smugly self-congratulatory at recognizing, even anticipating the new public morality while at the same time avoiding repressive action (always feared) by the government. By replacing its antiquated censorship strictures with the more permissive rating system, it assumed that it had effectively protected itself against all opposition and complaint. The contrary has occurred: the more tolerant Code is condemned on all sides. One reason is that the producer-signatories of the new agreement have flouted its injunctions, however lenient. To quote Mr. Valenti again, speaking this time in his role as chief designer of the Code, in July 1969 he excoriated "producers and directors who insert senseless violence and useless sex" into their films. One result is that Hollywood has suddenly awakened to what *Daily Variety* headlines in its March 18, 1970 issue as a "Tidal Wave of Censor Bills." From every state with the exception of Alaska (not yet heard from), there are a mounting number of pending bills aimed at curbing the "flagrant immorality" now flooding our screens.

Die-hard Puritans prefer unyielding, inflexible moral restrictions, and civil libertarians want no censorship at all. Bombarded by both camps, Hollywood is caught in the middle. The recent accolade of Best Picture of the Year to *Midnight Cowboy* (an X-rated film, which means a patron under 16 is denied admittance) must be an unintentional tongue-in-cheek riposte to this barrage! Nor has Hollywood profited unduly from the so-called pornographic pictures it has attempted, for in this twilight zone of production, the foreign films, not being subject to our Code, seem far and away more attractive to those seeking the concupiscent on the screen. To borrow Stanley Kauffmann's phrase, the new Code may not even turn out to be a "useful fraud."

Competition from European movie-makers is also affecting Hollywood adversely. The world of foreign film followers comprises a large and dedicated group who passionately espouse sophisticated motion pictures, many of which are necessarily foreign in origin for reasons involving government subsidization as well as talent. This is not the place to argue the relative merits of foreign and domestic films. It is enough to report that the numbers of foreign film adherents are swelling rapidly and their lack of interest in American films is conspicuous.

So here we have Hollywood in 1970, battered and bruised, and facing the greatest crisis of all, the loss of the right to fashion its own destiny. For the ceding of its sovereignty to a group of invading corporations with no experience of the film world has already wrought many distressing changes in Hollywood's way of life.

Having achieved substantial success in such disparate enterprises as real estate, garages, metals, chemicals, insurance, hotels, etc., these gargantuan corporations saw no reason why investment in films would not be equally profitable. But the film community has defied their most determined, businesslike efforts to cope with its creative vagaries and eccentric personnel. They have been utterly unable to organize and control its sprawling, amorphous dominion. One reason is geographic. Theirs is a valiant endeavor to exercise responsibility from their New York offices three thousand miles away. A stewardship conducted by remote control is rarely effective.

The new monarchs cannot understand a business which is both an art and an industry. They are impatient. Should the film arm of their vast enterprises become infected with the virus of failure, amputation via immediate divestiture is the recommended cure, lest it infect the rest of their corporate body.

Certainly their record to date is not encouraging. The red ink of deficits is splattering over the balance sheets. Paramount, purchased by Gulf and Western, is rumored to be for sale and its stages are being deactivated, with its officers moving from the studio to quarters in Beverly Hills. Warner Bros. is now in the possession of Kinney National Service, whose first major action encompassed a drastic slash in the number of employees, a concerted campaign to rent out as much studio space as possible and an announcement that only 25 percent of its own program of films will be shot in Hollywood. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, recently purchased by hotel-owner Kirk Kerkorian, and which once bore the proud legend of having "More Stars Than There Are in Heaven," has seen its personnel decimated, its collection of furniture and costumes auctioned off and three-quarters of its real estate put on the sales block. Universal is also a candidate, first Westinghouse and then Firestone having bid for it. Twentieth Century Fox is being courted by Walter Heller International Corporation and the Broadway producer, David Merrick. Embassy Films is already a subsidiary of Avco Corp., and the pattern of the future is writ large for all to see. The fear which pervades Hollywood film-makers is genuine and justifiable. The day of the locust has arrived.

The late David Selznick once prophetically described Hollywood and its major studios as "full of crumbling pyramids." His comment is mournfully appropriate today as Hollywood sits shivering in the sun.

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Stanley Kauffmann on films

How Young You Look

Still more Now films. They come so thick and fast – no, thin and fast – that there's no point in saying it's "time" for reassessment. Last month was one "time"; next month will be another. But a clutch of three recent films, cited below, are more interesting to discuss than to review.

A prime mistake about the Now or Youth film is the assumption that youth-worship is new in this country. It has been around a long time. Slick magazines always had a heavy preference for stories about people under 30, and so did radio shows. Leo McCarey's *Make Way for Tomorrow* (1937), a better tearjerker than many successful ones, was a flop because it dealt with old folks. Young people's lack of interest in their elders, as subjects of film or fiction, was only a trifle greater than older people's lack of interest in themselves. But – the crucial difference – older people used to control the youth image, and they shaped it to suit themselves: young folks in earlier films might stray or rebel, but sooner or later they saw the wisdom of their elders' ways. Until quite recently the guideline for youth in films, invisible but dominant, was: "When I was sixteen, my father was pretty dumb. Now that I'm 21, he's a lot smarter. Amazing how much the old man learned in five years." It made everybody beam.

Today, of course, the ending reads: "Now that I'm 21, he's even dumber. He'll never learn."

In late 1967, with *The Graduate*, the control of the youth image by the non-young was cracked. The crack came about, principally, because of an altered moral climate and the downward age-shift in the population. There were proportionately more young people than ever, and they were more grievously troubled than ever, and the first picture to acknowledge that truth with any degree of seriousness was a torrential success. The subsequent pictures that flooded through the crack, as I have pointed out many times, have varied widely in quality, and none of them has been first-rate. American film art has not zoomed to Olympus. But a large basic change has taken place: American films no longer need to use codes or disguises or patronizing transformations in order to treat contemporary subjects. At least there is now much more verisimilitude, even if – so far – there is not much serious art.

Now, after the recent *Getting Straight* (*NR*, May 30), there are three more Youth films. *The Magic Garden of Stanley Sweetheart* (MGM) is about the sexual and drug adventures of a Columbia undergraduate. *The Landlord* (United Artists) is about a rich 29-year-old who buys a rundown house to remodel it for himself, discovers that it is in a black ghetto and has black tenants, and learns about life. (A faint echo here of Shaw's *Widowers' House*.) *The Grasshopper* (National General) is about a 20-year-old girl from British Columbia, as eager for adventure as ever Joan Crawford was but much less inhibited, who becomes a ripple on life's stream in Las Vegas and Los Angeles. These three films share three sets of characteristics. First, they all have broad language, nudity, frank sexual references, casual use of drugs, and miscegenation without comment. (That is, the mixed couples never mention color as a possible barrier to bed.) Second, they all have several songs on the sound-track reminiscent of Simon and Garfunkel. Third, they all use plentiful up-to-date camera and editing techniques.

Verisimilitude is the key word. These films look more like American life than films used to. But their handling of materials that were recently taboo is so glib that we are never even faintly deluded about their sincerity. The sound-track songs are so obtrusive that these films almost seem like devices to promote record albums. And the cinematic display is piled on so mountainously that it dwarfs the already tiny content. For instance, there is a bed scene between the hero and his girl in *The Landlord* that is filled with gargantuan soft close-ups and lavish lyric lighting, utterly disproportionate to the two characters or even to the event's importance to *them*. The new directors (all three of these men are fairly new) have film tastes shaped less by good film models than by the TV commercial, which packs as much cinematic display as possible into those sixty seconds.

So, in less than three years, the Youth or Now or Mod film has solidified into a staple. The ostensibly "personal" film has become one more line of goods, once again "integrity" has become a prop of salesmanship, once again the Bitch Goddess feeds happily on her ostensible critics. Hollywood – still a usable term even if now less accurate geographically, even if now staffed with lots of university graduates – used to be cynical about lies; now it is cynical about truth.

It might seem, then, that those of us who took some pleasure in the American film's widened compass have already been bilked. But, if I'm not exactly happy about developments, neither am I depressed. Or surprised. As between cynicisms, I prefer the new to the old, and since it is the nature of Hollywood to be cynical, the choice is precisely between cynicisms. When serious subjects became admissible seriously, did we expect them to be allowed only to serious film-makers?

More important, the territory of the American film *has* been widened. That truth may prove irreversible. Some verisimilitude, at least, of the American psyche is now a commonplace on the American screen. In a popular-based art like the film, the figurative shape of the art is pyramidal: the broader the base, the higher the possibilities. If there had been no superficially probing Clyde Fitch or Augustus Thomas, Eugene O'Neill's job would probably have been much harder. An unconstricted Swedish film culture produces, along with its many sexual and psychologizing bores, an Ingmar Bergman. The new American film territory at least makes serious American film art more possible.

The former Youth image, controlled by the non-young, flattered the non-young. The new Youth image, controlled by the young, flatters the young. Like so many changes brought about by the young these days, it is at least partially an improvement. And like so many such changes, it is up to the young not to be pleased with partial success or to overlook what has been left undone or badly done, or to be co-opted by patronization. Hollywood, still cynical, will dance to any tune if enough people call it. The young au-

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John Seelye: The Sound of Money

The Nashville Sound: Bright Lights and Country Music
by Paul Hemphill

(Simon and Schuster; $5.95)

Paul Hemphill has written a succinct, crowded account of the rise of Country & Western music to the level of big business, a detailed, sometimes repetitious story about good ol' boys who have been taking a lot of money out of Country, and socking it into real estate, Cadillacs, and restaurant chains.

Beneath the crowd and push of this book, the dozens of names and scores of anecdotes about the not-so-sudden rise to fame of Roy Acuff, Glen Campbell, Tex Ritter, Buck Owens, and the various accounts and ways of making it in Country & Western music, there can be heard a sad sigh of nostalgia for the loss that commercial progress brings. The "old" music, either the pure Appalachian ballad or the corny Grand Ole Opry song, is on its way out, along with the small, low-watt Bible Belt radio station, with its commercials for universal balms, both medicinal and spiritual, which for so many years was the chief outlet for that music. Like everything else in America, Country & Western music is becoming homogenized and pasteurized.

Hemphill's book goes a long way towards explaining how it happened, how the Country & Western business has expanded from backroom and garage studios to a thoroughly professionalized, sixteen-track industry, and who the people are in charge, if people riding the crest of a popular craze can be said to be "in charge" of anything. Nashville's Music Row is a pandemonium of ambition and promotion.

Hemphill makes only tentative efforts to explain the increased popularity of the Nashville Sound. He attributes it to the migrations of hillbillies North, East, and West – more particularly to the urban manufacturing centers of the Midwest (Detroit, Akron, Chicago) and to the agrarian and oil areas of the West (Kern County, California). Where the country folk went, he reasons, their music followed. This is only part of a complex pattern, however, for the migrations occurred years ago, largely, and yet it is only recently that Pop Country (or Country Pop) has emerged as a commercial force. Similarly, the smoothing out of "hard" Country into "soft" Pop Country – Marlboro Country – is no recent phenomenon either. As Hemphill observes, Singing Cowboys like Gene Autry and Roy Rogers have been doing their bland thing for thirty years or more.

I think there is another, more elusive aspect to the pattern, which Hemphill only touches gently (to my mind) when he alludes to the tendency of Country and Western singers (and disc jockeys) to push a rightwing, reactionary political line. As they turn national, their tendency (as well as their twang) becomes less marked – Johnny Cash's occasional pro-Vietnam War mumbles, for example – but nonetheless observable. Nixon's invitation of singers like Cash to the White House is part of what is happening, for the emergence of Middle America is bringing with it Middle American sentiments and music, and the music of Blue Collar America is the twangy, whangy, jingoistic jingles of Nashville and the Grand Ole Opry.

Country music has its comic side, its lively side, its saucy side, but by and

The Monkey's Paw

When the war is over the bones of the lonely dead
will knit and rise from ricefield and foxfield
like sea-things seeking the sea, and will head
toward their homes in Hanoi or Seattle
clogging the seaways, the airways, the highways
climbing the cliffs and trampling the clover
heading toward Helen, Hsueh-ying, or Mary
when the war is over

When the war is over Helen, Hsueh-ying, or Mary
and lonely women all over the world
will answer the knock on the door like that insane story
and find on their doorstep something they used to hold
in their arms, in their hearts, in their beds
and that something will reach out and crumble
and the eyes cave back in the head
when the war is over

When the war is over curses will mount in the air
like corbies, to flock over capitol cities
and flutter and hover and waver and gather
till white buildings turn black beneath their cloud
and then they will drop like bombs, talons
zeroed in on the dead hearts still walking around
on the ground with memos in their briefcases
when the war, when the war is over

PETER MEINKE

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large it is *sad* music, expressing nostalgic regrets over lost loves, lost opportunities, lost parents, lost homes and places. It is also simple, infinite in its lack of variety, its dependence on a few, unranging chords. Country music may mellow as it goes Pop, but it continues to express a simple, nostalgic view of life, its mournfulness a dirge for what is lost and gone forever. This aspect of Country has roots deep in the traditions of folk music and spirituals, howevermuch transformed by modern themes. And most important, it appeals not only to the deep capacity for nostalgia evinced by Middle America, but also to a similar capacity on the part of the Other America as well.

Hemphill speaks only occasionally of this Other Country, of Joan Collins, Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, popularizers and radicalizers of Appalachia – the continuity of Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger. This is not, of course, his subject. Dylan becomes relevant only when he comes to Nashville to record "Nashville Skyline." Yet Hemphill marvels over the friendship between Dylan and Johnny Cash, the apparent Left and Right of a big, two-handed music, and it would seem a wondrous thing indeed. Cash explains it as the mutual respect of two artists for fellow excellence in craft: "Ah likes the way he *plays*," or some such – the generous admiration of the Rebel soldier for the marksmanship of the Yank. But there is more to it than that. Hemphill tells of a pro-America, hooray-for-our-boys-in-Vee-yet-nahm program at the Grand Ole Opry which ended with everybody singing Woody Guthrie's "This Land is Your Land," a song which has often been used to climax a New Left, get-our-boys-*out*-of-Vee-et-namn rally as well. "This Land" is everybody's property, apparently. How came this drawing upon a common tradition by the two wings of pop political America?

Part of the answer goes all the way back to Joe Hill and the I.W.W. Songster ("To Fan the Flames of Discontent"). The Wobbly songs were usually written to the tune of popular songs of the day: World War I marching songs ("Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, The Boys Are Marching"), militant hymns ("John Brown's Body"), and sentimental ballads ("Old Oaken Bucket," "My Old Kentucky Home"), often with a parodying sense of irony: "Work away down South in the land of cotton,/ 'Citizens' Leagues' and all that's rotten,/ Work away, day by day, nary pay, Dixie land." The chief purpose, aside from such incidental satire, was undoubtedly to make the songs easier to learn, but the result – often a bizarre union of Stephen Foster and radical sentiments – was a firm intermarriage of popular music and leftwing ideals.

To this happenstance we may add a more self-conscious element, for the increased attention being paid to native themes and modes by musicologists of the twenties and thirties – those same scholars who discovered both the Carter Family and Jimmie Rodgers of Hemphill's study, early stars of the Grand Ole Opry – coincided with the reemergence of radical movements in America during the Depression. The "Music of the People" seemed ideally suited to the Cause of the People. Add to this the fact that many of the uprooted and disenfranchised came from Bible Belt and Appalachian America, and you have the particular chemistry of Woody Guthrie, who adapted folk music to the people's cause.

But as Hemphill demonstrates, the migrant Okies eventually did find work in California. The case of Merle Haggard, a Country & Western singer from Bakersfield, California ("Nashville West"), reads like a continuation of *Grapes of Wrath*. The Haggard family migrated from Woody Guthrie country in the thirties, and after a period of wandering and privation, found a relatively comfortable niche in the San Joaquin Valley. What Steinbeck thought to be the seeds of revolution actually germinated as War Plants, and there is no more reactionary member of American society today than the Okie-Arky transplants in California. When they sing "This Land is Your Land" they mean to emphasize the next line of that song, "This land is *my* land," and they mean to keep it that way.

During the forties, while the Grand Ole Opry continued to preserve and popularize the "pure," "hard" country sound, Pete Seeger helped to keep the Guthrie brand of country music alive also. Especially during the McCarthy years it was Pete Seeger on the campus circuit who prepared the way for the tremendous vogue for folk and protest

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songs that was soon to follow.

The point is this: if the Country & Western music of Middle America was ready and waiting for Richard Milhous Nixon ("The Idea Whose Time Has Come"), so the tradition of Folk and Protest was all set for the rise of the New Left. Ready for it also was Rock 'n Roll. The hopeless tangle of political, ethnic, cultural, and narcotic allegiances involved in Folk Rock, Hard Rock, The Beatles, Rolling Stones, and Joe Cocker cannot be unwoven here, but I might generalize by saying that the Harder the Rock, the further into left field it falls. Unless, of course, it is knocked right out of the park.

The Left and the Right may differ as to their traditions and preferences in the use of country sound, but they are amazingly similar also, when you get right down to it. Unhappy Love is the great neutral theme, Unhappy Young Love on the one hand, with the suggestion of liaisons unblessed by Law, and Unhappy Fortyish Love on the other, with heavy hints of adultery and alimony. Songs which appeal to both factions, which leap the Generation (and Political) Gap, like Glen Campbell's "By the Time I Get to Phoenix," are sufficiently vague as to circumstances to please everybody with their generalized sadness.

Left and Right share also an evangelical bias in their uses of country sound. The "religious" basis of youthful radicalism has oft been noted, and never so well expressed as in songs whose origins are deep in the prayerful music of "soul," both black and white. Rhythmic, charged with emotional fervor by means of choric repetition, the hymns of Southern Fundamentalism are perfectly suited to the spirit of both New Left and New Right. Interludes of folk and rock music are standard fare for teach-ins and demonstrations, and when George Wallace hits the campaign trail he is sure to bring along a band of good ol' boys to help work up audience enthusiasm.

Relying as they do on emotional fervor, both Left and Right come full round in their uses of country sound, meeting back to back as it were, in the classic duellist pose. What is said may differ in principle, but the dominant mode – paranoia set to music – is the same. *Feeling* is the important, indeed the only word, and "gut reaction" is its synonym. If it's gut, it's got to be good. From this angle we can see how similar the politics of extreme Left and Right can be, perhaps with an unacknowledged Populist base, evangelical in overtones, tending towards feelings of persecution and sanctioning violence.

The protest songs of the Left are apt to interlock political with adolescent discontent ("Mrs. Robinson" and "Mr. Jones"), the expression of frustration with all authority, paternal and governmental. They are "prisoner's songs" in a figurative sense, the expression of a minority which cannot get its hands on its own destiny. Two of the most popular country singers today, Cash and Haggard, similarly owe much of their following to the prisoner theme, with the strategic difference that they sing of literal not figurative prisons. Hemphill points out that Cash's fame was helped mightily by "Folsom Prison Blues" and by his recorded prison concerts, inspiring a current, popular myth that Cash himself had actually served time. And Haggard, a real graduate of real prisons, draws often on his personal history for his songs.

But here, in this similarity, lies an important difference. Prison psychology is much like alcoholic psychology, and what dope is to the left hand side of Country, booze is to the right. Cash's "I Walk the Line," his first great hit and still his theme song, is typical, as is Haggard's "Mama Tried." Stoical, guilt-ridden, willingly submissive to wife or mama, beating the system instead of overthrowing it, the real prisoner and his songs are ironically superpatriotic. What happens to a member of the New Left tossed into a prison cell with the victims of the society he is bent on overthrowing is well known.

A sailor from somewhere in the Southwest with whom I served in the Korean war had two tattoos, one on each hand: "Death Before Dishonor," said one; said the other, "Born To Lose." It is this same, strange mingling of defiance and submission which is at the heart of what Hemphill calls "white soul," which informs both the songs and the politics of blue-collar, hardhat, hard-hand, redneck America. We may call it Nixon's War to suit present occasions, but Vietnam remains Johnson's War for all of that, and the people who support it are Johnson's People too. Paranoid, earthy, joshing, good ol' boys, with "Death Before Dishonor" on one hand, "Born To Lose" on the other, and "Mother" in curlicues over their hearts, they are personified symbols of Why We Are in Vietnam.

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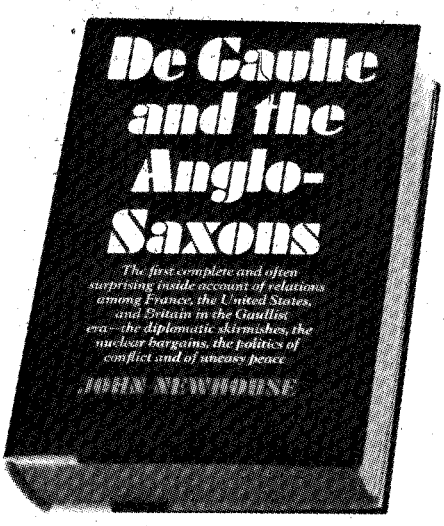
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Charles Thomas Samuels: A Woman's Place

Zelda
by Nancy Milford

(Harper & Row; $10)

Born late in her parents' marriage, Zelda Sayre shared little with five other siblings. Her father, a respected Southern judge, was irreproachably moral and unapproachable to his daughter; though that was balanced by her mother's worship. When Zelda's willfulness bloomed under maternal praise, she sometimes wondered what her father would think, but she persisted in exhibiting herself – nettles and all – to the mingled delight and shock of neighbors. Long before F. Scott Fitzgerald met her, she already embodied his heroines.

She was also incipiently mad, though neither of them knew it. Her grandmother committed suicide, as her brother would, while another sister had a nervous breakdown; and Zelda's escapades, for all their charm, skirted hysteria. Yet, she was beautiful, witty, the belle of Alabama; when Fitzgerald took her from her home on Pleasant Ave., the future looked bright. She adored him: "There seemed to me some heavenly support beneath his shoulder blades," she wrote, "that lifted his feet from the ground in ecstatic suspension, as if he secretly enjoyed the ability to fly but was walking as a compromise to convention." He adored her. Each adored the other's self-adoration. To so much love, the world must pay homage.

In the beginning, it did. He was a phenomenally successful writer, she a great beauty, they were as celebrated in their day as the Kennedys in ours. But there were danger signs. Fitzgerald regarded their lives as *his* property and raided Zelda's diary for his fiction. She tried to possess him but soon began to fear that the prize must be paid for in personal identity. As he grew more famous, she grew restive; her flirtation with a French aviator was brief, but deep. When Fitzgerald discovered it, he locked her in her rooms, thinking that settled the matter, though the liaison had caused Zelda to attempt suicide. In his turn, Fitzgerald romanced a movie starlet, inflaming Zelda's jealousy. Jealous of his work as well as his person, she determined to become an artist herself and, at an age that made dancing impossible, submitted herself to gruelling training in ballet. All the while she wrote: stories that Fitzgerald would revise, sometimes publishing them under a joint by-line, sometimes under his own name; and a novel which threw him into a fury because she, an amateur, dared poach on his preserve.

By this time, however, his fury was mixed with guilt, just as his love was burdened by duty, for Zelda was in one of the many sanitariums in which she was to pass her life. While undergoing treatment for schizophrenia, she wrote him letters mixing love with recrimination. In turn, he offered advice, defended himself, told her not to worry about the expense – and continued to incorporate her expressions of madness into *Tender is the Night*.

They enjoyed brief reconciliations, but always she broke down and had to reenter a hospital. They drifted apart: he, to deeper alcoholism and Sheilah Graham; she, to religious fanaticism, painting, a second novel that would never be published. After his death, her life lost its color, setting an ironic seal on her attempt at independence. Eight years after Fitzgerald died, Zelda died too – with perfect dramatic irony – in an accidental fire at her asylum. The couple who had everything!

Because this material is so dramatic, it would be easy to underestimate the brilliance of Nancy Milford's account. Her rare sense of structure (foreshortening the periods of Zelda's youth and middle-age so as to make the mad years devastatingly full and extended), her critic's understanding of language (illuminating not only Zelda's fiction but her letters and journals), her hu-

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manity (apportioning blame with delicate discrimination) make *Zelda* a triumph of art, a "non-fiction novel."

Or rather a non-fiction tragedy – worthy of Strindberg or Pirandello. Unusual though their life was, the Fitzgeralds' miseries are only heightened reflections of an intractable institution. The substance of their marital battles was individual ("Zelda was unable to stop [his drinking] and felt that he was growing indifferent to her because he preferred the company of his drinking companions. Scott felt that Zelda's dancing was executed in a spirit of vengeance against him and needled her about her commitment to it"), but the form is universal. Zelda was a selfish, undirected person; Fitzgerald was equally selfish, but he had his work: his salvation exacerbated her needs. The similarity which attracted them to each other also destroyed them, as happens with other couples. And who can hear Fitzgerald's moan at the injustice with which he'd be judged without recognizing the sentiment, if not the specifics ("I will probably be carried off eventually by four strong guards shrieking manicly [sic] that after all I was right and she was wrong, while Zelda is followed home by an adoring crowd in an automobile banked with flowers, and offered a vaudeville contract")?

Having decided to tell the familiar story from the wife's perspective, Milford illustrates, with Pirandellian force, the relativity of judgment. Received wisdom asserts that Fitzgerald was ruined by a mad wife; but as *Zelda* demonstrates, one can as easily argue that she was ruined by an artist's imperiousness. Of course, the truth lies between these extremes, on the tragic ground where *Zelda* is placed and only destiny seems to provide an adequate explanation. The Fitzgeralds shared a naive sense of human possibility, but whereas he corrected his vision in his work, she lived out the danger of its implications. She used his vitality, his love, and finally his money: he used her life.

Then she broke down, trying to put together a character never formed in childhood, so as to free herself from the character she had become. If *Zelda* contained nothing but the documents of this attempt it would be a major addition to the literature of mental anguish. Seldom has the interior life of an historical personage been reconstructed in such ample and moving detail.

But after all, Zelda is important only because she married Fitzgerald, a fact that Miss Milford never forgets in telling her story. As a result this book, splendid in fulfilling its own intention, is a crucial addition to our understanding of the novelist. I want briefly to show that this is so by referring to *Tender is the Night*.

Though everyone knows the novel's troubled history (and it was published in two different versions), critics have been understandably defensive about *Tender is the Night*. Considering the mental and financial stress under which it was written, the miracle is not that *Tender* failed of being the masterpiece intended by its author but that it is a good novel at all. Consequently, of Fitzgerald's many students, only one, Henry Dan Piper, has given anything like an adequate account of the book's weaknesses; and his assertion that *Tender* is two stories (one, about a man ruined by his own charm; the other, about a doctor who sacrifices himself to a mad wife) only begins to get at the problem.

That a problem exists has never been denied. If we assume that Dick is a victim, we must attribute his downfall to the power of wealth, which harms those who possess it; and the novel amply supports this reading, with its many portraits of upper-class degenerates. On the other hand, if we blame the hero's character, the villains become Dick's desire to be loved, his susceptibility to wealth and glamor, a belief that "the price of his intactness was incompleteness," which made him court tragedy for self-improvement.

But friendly critics insist that the explanations are complementary rather than contradictory and that, in any case, Fitzgerald can never be accused of whitewashing his hero. The brief he draws up is too clear:

> Dick got up to Zurich on less Achilles' heels than would equip a centipede, but with plenty – the illusions of eternal strength and health, and of the essential goodness of people; illusions of a nation, the lies of generations of frontier mothers who had to croon falsely, that there were no wolves outside the cabin door.

The indictment is clear but it is also clearly muffled. Even in listing these amiable weaknesses, Fitzgerald is careful to attribute them to external forces (the whole drift of American experience) and, at that, he introduces the list through coy indirection.

Because Fitzgerald made Dick a psychiatrist we are asked to believe in his self-comprehension. But as many readers have argued, he is scarcely credible in his professional role. Would a psychiatrist attribute an act so bizarre as marrying a cripple to impersonal forces? Wouldn't he rather have suggested that Nicole (Zelda) called to Dick (Fitzgerald) by some ironic reflection of his own needs? For good reason, Fitzgerald flirts with this question, but he does not actively confront it.

Milford helps us to see why. Early in her book she remarks that Fitzgerald's romances are full of love but barren of performance:

> The fault seems to lie in the puritanical restraint of Scott Fitzgerald's boys rather than in his girls. Never evenly matched, the boys forfeit what might have been their upper hand to their girls' imperious selfishness. By failing them again and again the boys, perhaps unwittingly, trap the girls into permanent performance of their game. Both sexes seem to survive on the nervous

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edge of the sexual maneuver while never achieving anything more than the retreat of the male and the end of the story.

Since she does not go anywhere without documentation, Miss Milford gives us regrettably little about the Fitzgeralds' sex-life, but she does tell us some crucial facts: Fitzgerald was upset by what he regarded as Zelda's "looseness" and she complained of his inattention. That Fitzgerald was something of a prude has often been noted, but usually it is excused ("no priggishness . . . only honest revulsion," as Andrew Turnbull asserts). However, the coincidence of Fitzgerald's reticence about sex and his heroes' preference for girls they can't have suggests that in some sense the author regarded women as a threat.

Why, we can tell by examining the manner in which he reconceived Zelda when creating Nicole. Zelda was maimed by an unapproachable father (whose probity, however, Fitzgerald lavishly admired). Instead, Nicole's father is a rapist, corrupting his child not with unyielding censoriousness but with license. In life, Zelda's affair with her aviator was stopped by Fitzgerald. In the novel, Nicole's affair stops the marriage. Moreover, though Dick remains faithful to Nicole in spirit if not in fact, Nicole revels in her newly released libido ("better a sane crook than a mad puritan," she thinks), which Fitzgerald clearly regards as a reversion to type. In short, Dick is not ruined by luxury but by the licentiousness which luxury allows. In contrast, *his* father was admirable: a puritan preaching an ethic of work rather than one of pleasure.

Pleasure and work are the true antagonists in *Tender is the Night*. At the beginning, Nicole seemed a perfect adjunct to Dick's career: her condition even made it advisable that they live near a sanitarium. Eventually, however, Dick comes to realize that, through her selfishness and wherewithal, it is precisely his career that she threatens. Zelda also threatened her husband's career, though, at first, she allowed herself to be literally absorbed in it. But when (in her insistence on pleasure), she began to interfere, he tried to resist this pressure by preaching the ethic of work. This she took up with even more manic energy, ironically irritating him more deeply than when she seemed content to be a frivolous woman. The resulting tension aided – though it did not cause – her collapse. In the novel, however, it is the husband who collapses, a victim to that avidity for pleasure in which Nicole represents the rich irresponsibles who mock Dick's traditional values. The depth of self-pity in all this as well as its basic dishonesty was instantly recognized by Hemingway, who advised Fitzgerald to forget his "personal tragedy" and complained to him that one shouldn't take liberties when sketching from life.

Fitzgerald, however, had to take liberties, since his novel was impelled not by a desire to understand but to justify. In consequence, he rendered not Zelda or his marriage but versions of each that flattered himself. But in doing so, he distorted the facts so badly that he came to join those critics who felt some terrible lapse in the book's credibility.

Nothing so points up the distortion as a little-noted scene that *does* sound like the truth. In it, Dick visits a 30-year-old mental patient, locked in an "Iron Maiden" of eczema – which were both Zelda's psychosomatic ailment and Fitzgerald's name for it. Like Zelda, she responds only to him; and, although she is maimed in mind and body, "in the awful majesty of her pain he went out to her unreservedly, almost sexually." In this woman, a former painter and beauty, Dick confronts not the problems (incest, wealth) with which Fitzgerald endowed Nicole but the real issues that divided the author and Zelda. "I'm sharing the fate of the women of my time," she tells him, "who challenged men to battle," to which he eventually – and tendentiously – replies, "You've suffered, but many women suffered before they mistook themselves for men." He concedes that she wished to explore the frontiers of consciousness, "the frontiers that artists must explore," but concludes that they "were not for her, ever." Then when she pathetically insists that "something must come out of it," he kisses her and advises, "we must all try to be good."

Women should know their place. They should seek virtue, leave ambition to men, and devote their lives to them (even to the extent of providing copy for their fiction). Beneath the apparent love of women in Fitzgerald's fiction

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there is an underlying contempt, a Catholic nightmare of the paradise lost when Eve seduced Adam from his labor. In his greatest fiction, this nightmare is attached to ideas and language that lend it dignity, as when Gatsby's mysticism tells him he ought not to "incarnate" his dream in Daisy, for only if he climbs the tree of life alone can he reach the "secret place" where he can "gulp down the incomparable milk of wonder." But what art does not transmute often remains mere neurosis, the artistic consequence of which is falsity. *Tender is the Night* is false in every way, from its attribution of blame to major details of plotting, like Nicole's precipitant recovery. Fitzgerald thought to solve the book's problems by reordering its chapters, but the blight is deeper: a failure of nerve. Though the failure could probably not have been avoided during the troubled days when *Tender* was composed, it is not justifiable. Nor is it justifiable for Fitzgerald's admirers – of which group I am a fervent member – to evade contradictions in his attitude toward women that mar all but the best of his work. More than anything written about Fitzgerald, Miss Milford's book helps us to see why he was contradictory. Hers is a tale that Fitzgerald's critics must read and ponder.

Saul Maloff: The Saving Remnant

Divine Disobedience: Profiles in Catholic Radicalism by Francine du Plessix Gray

(Alfred A. Knopf; $6.95)

"Reading the papers, you'd have thought they were a bunch of kooks," a Federal marshal remarked during a recess in the trial of the Catonsville Nine. "But they're not, they're a great bunch of regular guys." Yet again, a Federal marshal was wrong: they *were* a bunch of kooks – but of a new breed: kooks for Christ's sake, radical Roman Catholics – among them priests, a former priest and his wife, a former nun, a Brother – who were about to be convicted for burning (with home-made napalm) draftboard records in the obscure Maryland town they made illustrious by their witness. The conviction, they knew, was a foregone conclusion: they had destroyed property, hadn't they? – government property at that?

In the classic manner of the political trial, they made the courtroom a forum for their inflammatory beliefs; but even within this context, some of their behavior must have seemed bizarre to those who did not understand the depth of their passion. Their prevailing mood was joyous, triumphant, turned-on, high, exultant, even swaggering; when it was all over, when the dutiful jury had returned its predictable verdict, they addressed the forlorn judge as if they had been sent to save his immortal soul and then, in a liturgical act of guerrilla theater, linked hands and recited an ecumenical version of the Lord's Prayer.

A postlude followed the curtain. On the courthouse steps, after the finale, the cheering multitudes called to the star performer, "What do you say, Dan?"; and the Jesuit priest-poet replied, "It was like Brecht, wasn't it?" Again the congregation called to him, "What do you say, Dan?"; and Father Berrigan responded, "The bread is rising, isn't that good enough?" (the passwords of insurgent peasants during the French Revolution). The flamboyance was of a piece with an earlier remark he had made in reference to a large silver amulet he wore, an amulet in the shape of an abstract, dismem-

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bered fish. "That," he said, "is Jesus Christ after the institutional Church got through with him."

One may be mildly scandalized, though on the whole pleasurably so, by what may seem an occasional excess of personal style, but should not be distracted from the great issues these gestures are intended to dramatize. Francine Gray's indispensable book is unabashedly partisan: she gives wholehearted assent to the Catholics, lay and clerical, the "vanguard of the religious New Left," who are attempting nothing less than a "revolution in American Catholicism." Their quixotic acts of witness make the Catholic radical, she asserts, the "nation's fiercest security risk."

What strikes us about these "rebel heroes" is precisely their contemporaneity; they have been "radicalized," no less than their irreligious counterparts, by our common history. They do not exist in some eternal present of mythic time, and they are not throwbacks to an archaic period in some pastoral version of history; they are, indeed, unrecognizable except as products of the immediate present. Father David Kirk and his colleagues at Emmaus House in the East Harlem ghetto (where the motto also is "The bread is rising") are wonderfully inventive liturgical innovators in the mode of the "Underground Church" who can with reason claim descent from the primitive church; but Kirk himself was inducted into the theory and ethics of socialism before he became a Catholic, let alone a priest; and the Sunday Service that Mrs. Gray describes – the congregants sang "I'll Get By With a Little Help From My Friends" at the Offertory, and "Pack Up Your Sorrows" as a recessional, and one of them read a passage from *Tropic of Capricorn*, while from photographs on the walls Teilhard de Chardin, Bertrand Russell, the Beatles, and Pope John gazed down on the Agape in varying stages of wonderment and delight – speaks eloquently for itself. However one reads the term "radical," it's pleasant to speculate upon the reaction in the New York Chancery when Kirk speaks of "Chairman" Jesus as a "culture revolutionary . . . stirring up the people," of himself as a "spiritual stepchild" of Dorothy Day, and of Emmaus House as the stepchild of the Catholic Worker Movement in "trying to bring the same kind of activism into the problems of ghetto education, peace, white racism, human organizations." Remove the collar – "It's so hard for priests to know what to wear these days," Father Kirk said, referring to a priest-colleague in paint-spattered blue jeans – and you have a radical; put on the collar and you still have a radical, though with moving, interesting differences of style and flair, language and imagery.

Certainly this is true of the Berrigan brothers, the incendiaries of Catonsville who are the main characters – and the best known – in by far the longest section of the book. The heroic Fr. Philip Berrigan, whose training-ground for revolutionary action was the parish of the black ghetto, was already famous (and imprisoned) before Catonsville as one of the Baltimore Four who spilled their own blood over Selective Service files. From this "simple" action of opposition to the Vietnam war, the political spectrum in Catonsville was expanded to "protest racism, militarism, capitalism, imperialism, colonialism, and the apathy of the Catholic Church on all those issues." Among the Nine, for example, were the former Maryknoll priest and nun, Thomas Melville and his wife Marjorie, who had gone in all clerical innocence as missionaries to Guatemala and were led, not by ideology but by their experience with imperialism and its client state, to join the guerrillas – and were expelled first from the country and then from the Church. If these, and their fellow firebrands, are not among the saving remnant, where are just men to be found?

The most baffling figure in Mrs. Gray's gallery is Ivan Illich, now of Cuernavaca, a patrician among the dispossessed, an aristocrat reformist and not at all a revolutionary in the political sense, who was in fact protected by Cardinal Spellman when the hierarchic wolves went for him – an intellectual dandy with a mandarin taste for witty paradox and enigmatic utterance who founded a training institute to de-gringoize U.S. missionaries in Latin America, and who, when finally he became too much for the Church reactionaries, resigned his priestly functions to devote himself to educational

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innovation, his own preference in radicalism. Illich appears to take high pleasure in apparent inconsistency: anti-imperialism together with disdain for the Melvilles as "dilettantes and ingenues"; mass literacy programs with revolutionary implications together with contempt for the "Yankee Underground Church" as "not civil disobedience but civil unkemptness." In an act reminiscent of onetime Attorney General J. Mitchell Palmer's (who is not on any account to be confused with Attorney General J. Mitchell) hot pursuit of the Italian anarchist Dante Alighieri, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith summoned Illich to the caves of the Vatican in 1968 and there, in those dread surroundings, put to him, in the person of Rome's "specialist in the physical details of non-consummated marriages," such hellfire questions as: "What is the nature of your relations with Octavio Paz and Carlos Fuentes?" and "Is it true that you would like to see women go to confession without a grate in the confessional box?" and "Is it true that beginning in 1960 there has been in you a dangerous general development of new ideas and disintegrating tendencies of a humanitarian and libertarian nature?"

Yet Illich is a liturgical and theological conservative, and unyielding on celibacy and clerical marriage. He is unlike the Jesuit priest and professor at the Harvard Divinity School (absent, alas, from this extraordinarily moving book, though close to its spirit) who wrote recently that we shall witness the renewal of the Catholic Church "on the day when there is a pregnant Pope who is either African or Asiatic."

Television

Let the *Real* Corn Grow

Recently I was sick a-bed and out of my mind, and had several other sound reasons for watching TV in the afternoon. The show was one of the old "Little Rascals" films containing a wild scene on a Pullman sleeping car with firecrackers and upper-berth athletics. I had already seen it ten times, and it was just as funny as ever. I lay there giggling like an idiot.

My children giggle like idiots at the "Little Rascals" too, so my sentimental recollections are not the sole cause of my giggle. Mack Sennett is a special aesthetic commodity now, no matter what generation is watching; his films exude an innocence social, technical and ideological that is at once devastating to lose and impossible to recapture. Modern attempts at equivalence on TV turn out to be deliberate and phony camp.

Maybe the trouble with TV is that it never had an age of innocence. Even its earliest days, on small screens filled with snow, inherited the whole Hollywood experience of cameras and corn, plus the radio experience of commercials and electronic stagemanship. Because of its inheritance TV burst on us fully grown, that is, fully conditioned to a variety of conventional techniques, customs, manners; and this conditioning took effect at both the sending and receiving ends. Only the instrument itself was new. What we expected and what was delivered were old in the worst way – old in spirit.

And the oldness grows apace; even the shows for children (I think particularly of the present generation of cartoons) are sick-old. Nor is commercialism the chief trouble; Mack Sennett was commercial too, and knew how to overdo a good thing – but he somehow avoided being slick, smooth, sophisticated, machine-like in his productions. Partly it was his technical simplicity that leaves us now with the sense that he was at one with his "rascals" (and the dog with the circle around his right eye always looked intelligent enough to run a camera), but partly it was his plain humanity – for example, his interest in children's faces, and in genuinely sentimental children's events.

Another word for "old" in this context – I am searching for the opposite of Mack Sennett – is professional. From

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its infancy TV has been run by professionals, who were first learned in the ways of Hollywood and radio, then learned in TV itself – and who were never accordingly blessed with the kind of devil-may-care that created "Little Rascals." The only place I can think of on TV where amateurism has had any play has been in educational TV, with miserable results. Amateurism on educational TV has meant not the "Little Rascals" but up-tight teachers lecturing in front of cameras as if they were in class but had lost their students (and in fact such teachers *have* lost their TV students every time). Quite properly the recent big investments in educational TV by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Ford Foundation and others have been aimed at making educational TV professional, and therefore competitive with the commercial stuff. That is fine and dandy – educational TV must be partly competitive to survive – yet its new sophistication is one more blow against the amateur spirit. And though the amateur spirit has to my knowledge produced only bad TV shows so far (except for legacies like the "Little Rascals"), we do need to preserve amateurism *some*where on the tube if we are ever to achieve a measure of genuinely public broadcasting.

Remember that the public, though conditioned to professional TV, is itself incurably amateur; it will therefore never be able to make of TV a participatory sport unless room can be made, and a suitable format found, for people to appear who are not professionals. (And an audience trained to watch them.) Take politics for instance. We armchair reformers can talk up a storm about giving prime time to dissent, to minority groups, to consumer affairs, youth affairs, all kinds of important affairs that the air waves obviously ought to be open to if they are to be regarded as public air waves; but our proposals are merely utopian if we can't at the same time propose practical measures for making the *climate* of the medium more inviting to the amateur spirit than it now is. For not everybody who should appear on TV can afford President Nixon's crash courses in TV performance.

The medium may of course simply not be amenable to amateurism, in which case it will not, I would guess, remain a superpower long. Perhaps in twenty years the professionals will have killed it; nobody will believe a word or smile it emits, so won't turn it on.

But since a bad actor of a fat boy chased by a bad actor of a mustachioed cop can still slay me, I refuse to believe the tube's public potential has been thoroughly explored.

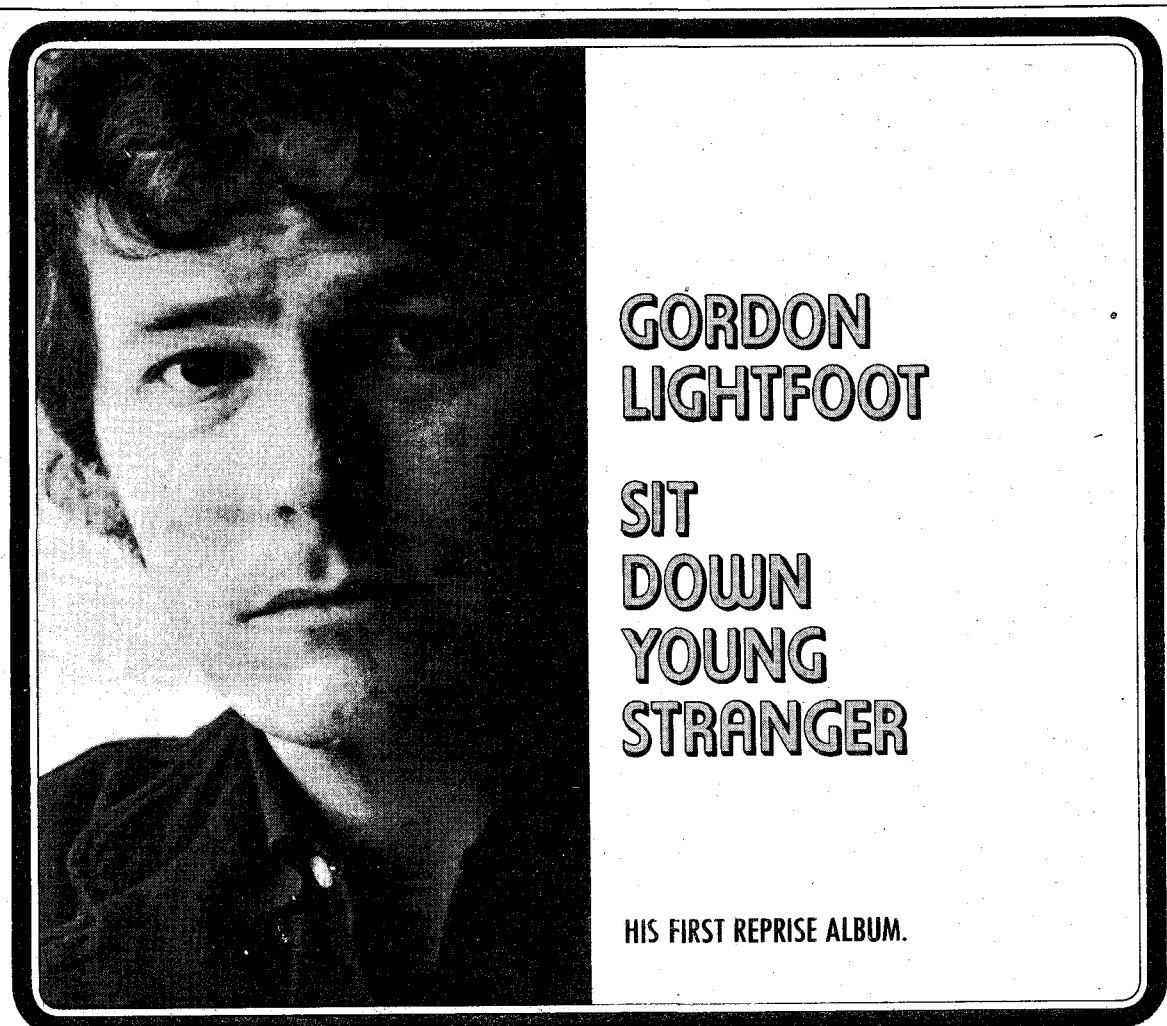
Sedulus

Correspondence

Sesame Street

Sirs:

The mischievous column on "Sesame Street" (June 6), signed by Sedulus contains the first defense of look-say reading instruction I have seen in print in a decade. "Most children," your critic says, "read several easy first grade books before they master the alphabet; the confidence they get from



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reading makes learning the letters much easier."

This nonsense was widely believed at schools of education twenty years ago, and was still respectable as late as, say, 1960. Nobody believes it today. The near-unanimous position of people who have studied the subject is expressed by Jeanne Chall in her Carnegie-sponsored study *Learning to Read:* "The research from 1912 to 1965 indicates that a code-emphasis method – i.e., one that views beginning reading as essentially different from mature reading and emphasizes learning of the printed code for the spoken language – produces better results, at least up to the point where sufficient evidence seems to be available, the end of the third grade . . . [B]etter results in terms of reading for meaning are achieved with programs that emphasize code at the start than with the programs that stress meaning at the beginning." Dr. Chall's report made quite a splash when it was published (1967) because she had previously been identified with the approaches endorsed by Sedulus.

It is bad enough to read an ignorant attack on "Sesame Street" in the pages of *NR*. To find that the attack has been made pseudonymously is infuriating.

Martin Mayer
New York City

Sirs:

Perhaps "readiness" isn't the whole problem of underachievers, but a little readiness helps! So what if "the learning is still mechanical"; they really do learn from "Sesame Street." Children are shown that letters make words, and that words beginning with similar sounds begin with the same letter. And they *do* see the point of the alphabet, as soon as they learn to spell their own names. It is a challenge to a 3-year-old.

They *do* learn that counting is more than just saying numbers, as they are shown a given number of interesting objects being counted. Perhaps children need more physical activity, but we should not expect this of TV.

Judith A. Cohen
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Sirs:

Your criticism is a minor masterpiece. As an instructor of Children's Literature, I have watched *SS* with great hope – and have found only great disappointment. The potential of the show is profound, but as you so thoughtfully and cogently point out, it lacks the "first-rate things." It's perhaps one cut above the old "Romper Room" of some time back, but only one.

Why do we so consistently short-change our children? We dump *Macbeth* on our ninth graders and wonder why they 1) can't read it, 2) hate Shakespeare, 3) are "anti-intellectual," whatever that means. I firmly believe that enjoyment of literature as well as understanding of much of life can come only to the adult who has early in life known the joys and enlightenment that words provide: Mother Goose, Beatrix Potter, E. S. White, etc.

Grayce Scholt, Language Division
Flint Community Junior College
Flint, Mich.

Sirs:

Sedulus argues for "genuine" misery, terror, or exultation, as if most kids were not already well acquainted with the first two, and some also with the third. Why do they need to have Gordon and Mr. Hooper engage in a real fight over a pile of trash when Mommy, Daddy and the neighbors can provide them with a steady diet of heated tiffs and brooding acrimony over issues of even less importance?

What many – and perhaps most – children need is a few lessons in accepting the faults and foibles of their associates with equanimity. So when Oscar the Grouch blows out all his birthday candles and announces that he wished that all of his fellow celebrants would go away and leave him alone, the breach of etiquette doesn't cause enmity because Oscar is what he is and is fun anyway. Or when Big Bird or Buddy and Jim again display their towering stupidity, they are not scorned or derided but continue in the personal affections of a tolerant community. Or when Ernie cons Bert out of his dessert, this pair of inseparables need not come to a bitter parting of the ways and disruption of their delightful household.

As for the "strong, scary stuff of old English and African fairy tales" of which our critic is so fond, children do not need "Sesame Street" for that. "Batman" and the Saturday morning cartoon shows supplement the tales (which are still around, notably in schools). Children will continue to add to their lists of cosmic offenses and nurse their dream of cosmic revenge.

Meanwhile, when the kid accustomed to asphalt and the weekly wash hanging between the buildings can learn about cows and how he gets his milk, when the city which today's adults find so repellent can again be depicted as the playground Detroit was for me, and when my 28-month-old son can point out to me that triangles are used in the construction of a bridge, I feel confirmed in my judgment that much that is good is happening on "Sesame Street."

Robert D. Jaehnig
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Sirs:

Your critical appraisal of "Sesame Street" is a welcome change from the blindly enthusiastic response accorded an admirable effort. The same reaction is familiar in the area of children's book reviews. If a given work isn't awful, it is hailed as wonderful – partly because the adults making judgment know nothing about children, and partly because anything designed for a

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child seems charming to the average grownup.

One of the things that probably is wrong with "Sesame Street" is the pace ("always fast-paced and bouncy") – which is practically subliminal in technique, and enough to drive a kid out of his mind eventually. Of course nobody wants to go back to the horrendous old days of Miss Frances, who used to answer all questions with "Tha-a-a-a-at's ri-i-i-ght!", but why replace an extreme fault by its opposite?

Another sad aspect of the "Sesame Street" format is that the viewers seldom have any opportunity for feeling acquainted with the other children who are on the show; the adults rule supreme. This is not true in a schoolroom, luckily – but it is one of the characteristics of the average preschooler's home.

Ada C. Rose
Haverford, Pa.

Sirs:

That was easily the best review of "Sesame Street" I've seen. And I wrote one myself for Education Broadcasting Review.

Jeannette Veatch
Professor of Education
Arizona State University

Sirs:

Thank you and congratulations for your excellent article on "Sesame Street," which says better than anything else I have seen what is so wrong about that very entertaining program.

John Holt
Boston, Mass.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

JOHN SEELYE *is in the English Department at the University of Connecticut.* CHARLES THOMAS SAMUELS, *of Williams College, is the editor of* A Casebook on Film *(Van Nostrand Reinhold).* SAUL MALOFF *is professor of English at Hunter College, City University of New York and author of the novel,* Happy Families. PETER MEINKE *is associate professor of literature at Florida Presbyterian College.*

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Campus Violence

Sirs:

This is to convey my congratulations to Professor Bickel for writing and to *The New Republic* for publishing his "The Tolerance of Violence on the Campus" (June 13). Mr. Bickel had the courage to put his finger on one of the major causes of campus problems: the willingness of academic intellectuals to condone, rationalize and explain away endlessly the alarming decline of free expression and academic standards. Today the orthodoxies and conformities of the campus – including the conformity of mindless alienation – match (and sometimes exceed) the conformities and orthodoxies which prevail in other sectors of society. Colleges and universities have proved themselves totally incapable of handling the threats to free expression (and its erosion) originating with the New Left radicals. On the campus as elsewhere, when the chips are down, the commitment to free expression and civil liberties has been easily overwhelmed by political partisanship and by adults who almost compulsively seek the approval of the young.

The situation will not improve until both faculty members and administrators find the inner strength to assert that those who merely wish to use the university for a political base have no reason to be there, and that the academic community does not have to turn the other cheek to those seeking to destroy it.

Paul Hollander
Associate Professor of Sociology
University of Massachusetts

Sirs:

Like most of Prof. Bickel's pieces *The Tolerance of Violence on the Campus* is lucid and well reasoned and it would be a pleasure for me, a man past 60, to applaud it. Unfortunately, it seems to me to be entirely unrealistic.

These two sentences, I think, are the key: "These stenciled and spoken slogans and threats are called dissent. But they are in truth vandalism, a kind of aggression almost physical, in content most often a series of courses which do not pretend any attempt at persuasion."

Yes, that's the rub. Persuasion is possible only in a society guided by reason. It has been many a year since reason has had any general prevalence in this country. What have counted in our society are money and power. We have glorified them and depreciated reason. And I am bound to say that Prof. Bickel's profession has done more than its bit in that regard.

What does persuasion get us, professor? No one could have been more eloquently persuasive in his reasoned attacks on the Vietnam war than Sen. Fulbright. Did Lyndon Johnson listen? Has Richard Nixon listened? The Negroes in this country have had eloquent defenders, but they got next to nothing until they *acted.*

The truth seems to me to be that these young people Prof. Bickel is denigrating have done their homework better than he. They have observed that nothing moves this society to certain long-overdue reforms except action so emphatic that it sometimes becomes violence. I regret this, it does not seem to be a part of the world I grew up in; it makes me feel most uncomfortable. But it is here, and I cannot see how it has eluded Prof. Bickel.

Charles C. Allam
Phoenicia, N.Y.

Kauffmann, *from page 20*

dience – which is not only the majority audience now but on the whole the best film audience this country has ever had – can call better ones. If only it will get over its childish (not young!) pleasure in having been recognized, if only it will demand the right to be angered, to be expanded. Most Youth films so far are "recognition" films: they get their effect by providing accurate correspondence with the world

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outside. But that is where the best films *begin*.

Five years ago, in an essay called "The Film Generation," I called that generation "the most cheering circumstance in contemporary American art." This seems to me to be even more clearly the case now. I also hoped that the Film Generation would make some demands. It has, and now it is in control. Thus it is now in danger. The audience rules the film world, and rulers are always the target of flatterers.

Next week Mr. Kauffmann will discuss Paramount's Catch 22.

Personals

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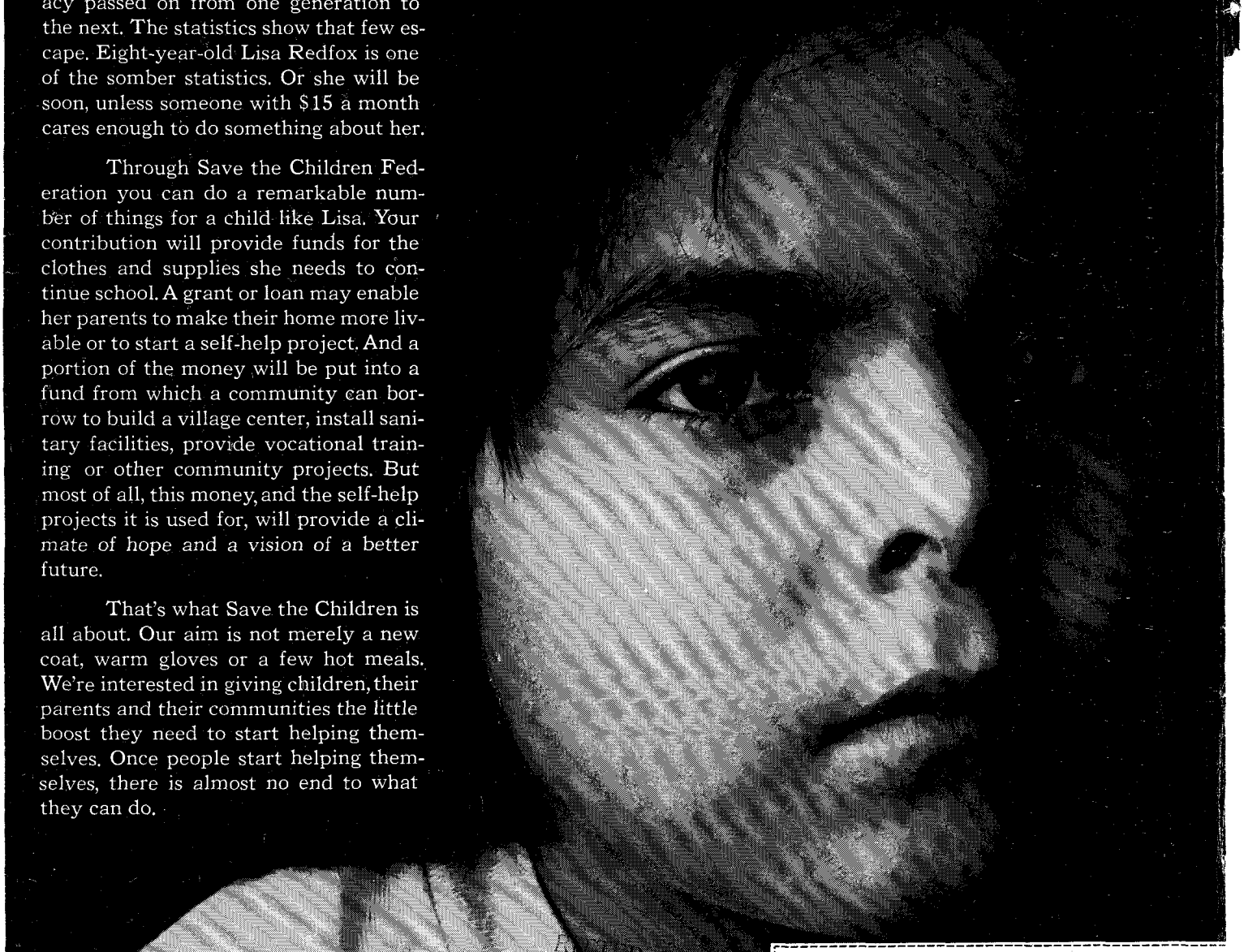

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